

TRAITORS
WITHIN

EX-DETECTIVE
INSPECTOR

HERBERT E. FITCH

B.A.



Hurst & Blackett



HERBERT T. FITCH

TRAITORS WITHIN

**THE ADVENTURES OF DETECTIVE
INSPECTOR HERBERT T. FITCH**

By

**EX-DETECTIVE INSPECTOR
HERBERT T. FITCH**

(Of the Special Branch, New Scotland Yard)

WITH 13 ILLUSTRATIONS



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CONTENTS

Book I

ANARCHISM

CHAPTER I

The enemy among us. Plots against the Royal Family. Why Sir Henry Wilson was shot. Poisoned chocolates sent to the Home Secretary. The Special Department and its job	PAGE 15
---	--------------------------

CHAPTER II

I wait on Lenin and Trotsky. Lenin rebukes me. What I heard in the cupboard. What Lenin suggested for England. Some fun with the Foreign Barbers	21
--	-----------

CHAPTER III

Maxim Gorky comes to London. The end of Marie Derval. Leone Povinelli pays the price. A private printing press. Karpovitch hides in Pimlico. Plotting the Tsar's death and the Kaiser's murder	28
--	-----------

CHAPTER IV

When Lapidus and Hefeld ran amok in London. How the murderers were trapped. The murder of Sir William Wyllie and Dr. Lalaca. The anarchists behind the murders	35
--	-----------

CHAPTER V

The Gardstein murders. The armoury at the murderer's house. What it was meant for. Malatesta visits us. His history and activities. A letter from Peter the Painter	42
---	-----------

CHAPTER VI

The man I fought outside Buckingham Palace. The Royal Box at Covent Garden invaded. The man with the skull and cross-bones	50
--	-----------

CONTENTS

CHAPTER VII

	<small>PAGE</small>
The outbreak of war. Communists shepherded into prison camps. The stormy-petrels fly north-east. How Russia was destroyed. Strikes at home. Germany follows Russia	56

CHAPTER VIII

I arrest Morel. An ex-M.P. arrested for distributing harmful pamphlets. Communists try to sow sedition at the Front, and what the soldiers did. Mr. Ramsay MacDonald at the Front	62
---	----

CHAPTER IX

I arrest the Bolshevik Ambassador during the Second Russian Revolution. Has the leopard changed his spots? The Police Strike of 1918. General Macready becomes Police Chief. Soldiers at the Yard	69
---	----

CHAPTER X

After the War. Anarchists among the "demobbed" meet with little sympathy. We deport them but use their funds. Degradation of Trebitsch Lincoln, and his extraordinary career	76
--	----

CHAPTER XI

The man who brought money from Russia. The Chief Soviet Courier comes to visit us. Anarchists who abuse the privileges of the Press. The armoury at Acton. A loyal out-of-work. An English Colonel arrested for sedition	83
--	----

CHAPTER XII

Good-bye to the Yard. Anarchism nowadays. Dramatic moves of recent years. The Zinovieff Letter—the truth. The Arcos Raid. Will England ever tolerate a Russian Dictator?	90
--	----

Book II

ESPIONAGE

CHAPTER I

How the Spy works. Spies in peace-time. Spy Clubs. Letter-boxes; travelling agents; carrier pigeons. How information is sent overseas. I act as bodyguard to the Kaiser	99
---	----

CONTENTS

7

CHAPTER II

	PAGE
I arrest a Doctor of Philosophy during the Agadir incident. The spy who asked a lawyer to help him ! The Spy School at Amsterdam loses a pupil	106

CHAPTER III

Mr. Peterssen comes into action. Captain Grant makes a mistake. The Navy sees it through. Exit Heinrich Grosse ; the girl he left behind him	112
--	-----

CHAPTER IV

Herr Steinhauer pays us a visit. When the War broke out. Preparing for new duties	119
---	-----

CHAPTER V

The Spy round-up of 1914. The Censor ; how it worked and grew. My work in East Anglia. Carrier pigeons fly seawards. The Censor hands me some spy news. A first brush with the enemy	125
--	-----

CHAPTER VI

Wiping out the score for Whitby and Scarborough. Janssen and Roos go to the Tower. Harwich signals the submarines	132
---	-----

CHAPTER VII

The stamp-collector spy. The spy who played the violin	140
--	-----

CHAPTER VIII

Hahn and Muller gathered in. I am promised the Iron Cross ! The Plans I sold to Germany. Mr. Roggen is interested in torpedoes	145
--	-----

CHAPTER IX

I meet some Women Spies. The lady who went to Scotland by car. Mrs. Doctor Smith and her fishpond. I cross another trail	151
--	-----

CHAPTER X

Mr. Rowland goes to the Tower. Blindfolded with his lover's handkerchief. The tragic story of Sir Roger Casement	158
--	-----

CHAPTER XI

The tragedy of Lord Kitchener. Spies who claimed the toll of the Hampshire. Frank Greite is caught. The Indian Plots	165
--	-----

CONTENTS

CHAPTER XII

	PAGE
The Movie-agent spy. His work before the War. A bottle of ammonia. An indiscreet M.P. The prisoner who walked to London	171

CHAPTER XIII

George Vaux Bacon and the pseudo-American journalist spies. The man who taught Swedish drill. Germany's nastiest spy shot dead	178
--	-----

CHAPTER XIV

An ex-Lord Mayor degraded from knighthood. Fritz Duquesne, the world's master spy. Women spies have the last word. Are there spies among us to-day ?	186
--	-----

Book III

REFLECTIONS

CHAPTER I

Looking at crime to-day. The foreign criminal menace. How two of them were caught. How to weed them out	195
---	-----

CHAPTER II

Secret societies in Great Britain. Ku Klux Klan members here. Soho's Italian secret societies. Chinese societies in Limehouse	202
---	-----

CHAPTER III

Modern blackmail. The cancer of modern society. All classes involved. Personal experiences. Police precautions. The remedy	208
--	-----

CHAPTER IV

Society criminals. Youths and girls who try crime for a thrill. Spongiers ; card-sharps ; robbers. Varsity girl criminals. Police difficulties. Night clubs	215
---	-----

CHAPTER V

Drugs in England. How they are run in. The quickest way to get rich. Adventures with the dope smugglers. Suburbs reeking with cocaine. Careless doctors. Inequalities of drug laws	221
--	-----

CONTENTS	9
CHAPTER VI	
Prostitution to-day. An increasing source of crime. How to stop it. White slavery a real peril. Women criminals the worst	PAGE 227
CHAPTER VII	
Modern murderers and their methods. The death penalty the only safeguard. What murderers say about it. Too much leniency dangerous. The Black Cap	234
CHAPTER VIII	
The chemistry of modern police work. Test-tubes more feared than handcuffs. Hanged by a pinch of dust. Analysis wonders in peace and war	241
CHAPTER IX	
The Force as a career. I was a Public School man on joining—the Yard wants brains as well as brawn. Policemen who get £1000 a year. The private detective business. How brains have helped the Yard. Latest methods of crime detection	248
CHAPTER X	
Unsolved mysteries of the Yard. Murderers who are never found. Why they escape. Organization needs. Keeping the Force's integrity. Temptations of a policeman	253
CHAPTER XI	
Some Royalties I have met. King Edward and the wine-butler. Prince Olaf sees the sights of London. Some good royal stories	260
CHAPTER XII	
The future of police work. Modern criminals and their punishments. Are the gunmen coming here? Should policemen be armed? Bad times ahead if we have too much leniency	265

ILLUSTRATIONS

	<i>Frontispiece</i> FACING PAGE
HERBERT T. FITCH
HOUNDSITCH MURDERS
HERR STEINHAUER
HAICKE MARINUS PETRUS JANSSEN
WILLEM JOHANNES ROOS
JOSEF MARKS
ALFREDO AUGUSTO ROGGEN
LIZZIE EMILE WERTHEIM
REGINALD ROWLAND ALIAS GEORGE BREECKOW
FRANK L. T. GREITE
LEOPOLD VIEYRA ALIAS PICKARD
GEORGE VAUX BACON
ANTON BAUMBERG ("COUNT ANTON DE BORCH") AND THE SEAL HE INvariably USED

BOOK I
ANARCHISM

"A crank is a little thing that makes revolutions."

CHAPTER I

The enemy among us—Plots against the Royal Family—Why Sir Henry Wilson was shot—Poisoned chocolates sent to the Home Secretary—The Special Department and its job.

IMEDIATELY the word anarchism is mentioned, a host of bluff gentlemen and studious ladies pooh-pooh, or smile a superior smile. They will tell you that anarchism is just an alarmist name for—in the case of Russia—a people's revolt against despotism, and in the case of England for the activities of a few half-starved tub-thumpers. In the course of a lifetime spent in the Special Department of Scotland Yard, one half of my work has been devoted to the study of anarchism and its prevention in this country. As a policeman, I have learnt not to be an alarmist, but to deal with irrefutable facts and logical conclusions. The facts I will give you in this book ; facts about the incendiaries, the political murderers, the Cheka agents, the anarchist agitators with whom I personally have come in contact and whose activities I can describe. The conclusions I leave to you.

First of all, then, clear your minds of the delusion that revolutionaries, as such, cannot exist in the free air of England. They thrive on it! For half a century England has been the dumping-ground and the sanctuary for all sorts of extremists whose own countries have grown too hot to hold them. Older readers will remember pre-War days when the police in London, Manchester and Glasgow had constant scuffles with mobs of communists directly inflamed by the presence among them of Russians and Jews who

later became the leaders of the Russian revolutions. At that time Scotland Yard received unending enquiries from Russia, Spain, Italy and America concerning dangerous agitators who had sought refuge here and who printed in London for export inflammatory leaflets, copies of which subsequently came back (with bitter marginal police comments) from St. Petersburg, Madrid, Rome or New York.

To-day, although we have tightened up our laws concerning undesirable aliens, we have just as many in our midst. But to-day they are the dangerous kind—the quiet kind who work instead of talking. Periodically, I notice in one or other of the newspapers that Lord Trenchard has made some subtle tightening of police regulations concerning unwanted agitators, or that somebody with a common Polish or Italian name has been deported. Turning back in my own cuttings books, I come across other mentions of the deported; perhaps, in my own case-books, there are notes of how I shadowed him years ago. In those case-books and cuttings I have a number of entries ringed in red ink. They are records of successful or almost-successful anarchist outrages. And they are getting more frequent!

I am not permitted to tell the full story of the events which led to the shooting of Sir Henry Wilson. But this at least I may now say, without contravening the Official Secrets Acts, that the reason he was shadowed and finally shot on his own doorstep in sedate Belgravia was that he knew too much about revolutionary activities in Ireland. At that time, Lord French's car was like a tank—even the windows were bullet-proof; and a number of other famous soldiers and policemen never ventured out of doors without an armed escort.

Scotland Yard took swift and decisive action before the echoes of Sir Henry's assassins' running feet had died

away on the Eccleston Street pavements. Arrests were made; papers were found plotting the deaths of a number of world-famous people as well as certain famous Ministers; and several men were deported shortly afterwards with the promise that, if they were ever found again on English soil, life-imprisonment would be the best they could hope for after.

A year or two previously a double attempt at murder was made in the interests of anarchism, and as a result we nearly lost Sir William Horwood, then Chief of Police, and the Home Secretary. Sir William, opening his correspondence at home one morning, found in a parcel an ornate box of chocolates. The box bore no communication, and was apparently from an admirer. The chocolates looked very tempting, but the address on the label was squarely printed, and the Police Chief wondered why such pains should have been taken to disguise the handwriting. Certain threats which had been made occurred to him. Ten minutes later, those chocolates, under police analysis, were proved to contain enough arsenic to kill a regiment!

It was a grave error to send such a thing to the Head of Scotland Yard. Had it not been for that mistake, much more alarming things might have resulted. But the Special Department realized at once that the effort would probably not be a solo one, and immediately telephone wires began to hum. We knew exactly which famous persons were suffering from anarchist displeasure just then; and one of them, the Home Secretary, reported receipt of just such another box of chocolates. They, too, contained arsenic!

The chocolates, their packing, their box, the paper in which they were wrapped, the laboriously printed addresses were all examined under a microscope. Within a few minutes of the end of the examination the Flying Squad

were out, and a cordon of official blue was closing in down every street and alley towards a house whose tenant had previously aroused suspicion. The arrest was tame enough that time, and the man was proved guilty but pleaded insanity. Actually, he was only a tool; other men of whom nothing, unfortunately, could be proved, had undoubtedly had a hand in the matter, and they were later asked to leave the country. They were very lucky indeed to get out of England so cheaply.

During the War an attempt was planned to murder Mr. Lloyd George by means of poisoned arrows from a blowpipe, but once more Scotland Yard was too quick for the miscreants, and so the life of our greatest war-time statesman was saved.

This chapter, which has been more in the nature of an introduction and an outline of a few facts which show that anarchism is by no means a fevered fancy, would be incomplete without a few words on the Special Department of our Detective Service—that Special Branch in which, from 1905, I lived and worked.

There has always been a delusion among extremists that when a murder is committed under the guise of a "political protest" the murderer cannot be punished except by imprisonment. Anarchist agents here definitely instruct their fanatical tools to this effect; and many such are ready to buy cheap glory by bombing a Prime Minister or a Home Secretary, and would certainly do so were it not that Scotland Yard acts while the bombs are in the making.

In order to have a department specially trained and ready to check the growing menace of political murders, the Special Department was formed in the early 'eighties. That it was necessary then is proved because, shortly after, when Mr. Balfour's carriage was rushed by a mob armed with sticks and stones, only a ring of "Yard" revolvers

saved him from being murdered. Queen Victoria's person was always followed by seven armed men, but they were once eluded and she was struck by a club; and the tragic fate of Mr. Spencer Perceval years before while walking in the House of Commons showed to what lengths political fanatics would go.

Not nearly everything may be told, even to-day, about my old "shop." But it was through the failure of its equivalent in Austria that the Serajevo incident took place and the world was plunged into the horrors of the War. To-day, the Special Branch is guarding the Royal Family; no statesman of note stirs abroad without the unostentatious accompaniment of burly men in grey suits; night and day, secret guns, aircraft and submarines are watched and guarded; an impenetrable, unbribable circle is invisibly drawn around vital political discussions, facts of which might set the world on fire.

Have you ever seen a small news paragraph saying that certain Government plans have disappeared? Reading between the lines, the detective knows that some foreign power has struck us a terrible blow, that unofficial "notes" are flying with alarming speed, and that the shadow of War may be darkening our very gates. But always, some days later, a few words appear saying that the plans have been recovered. Only the Special Branch knows of the swift, sure moves, the merciless activity of brains keener than Sherlock Holmes's, the silent arrests, perhaps the world-catastrophe averted. No common picture-paper "sleuths," these policemen whose names the public does not know, but men whose lives may be forfeit at any moment by bomb or knife, and without whom our Government would be paralysed and nerveless.

Do not think I exaggerate. Since 1900 no less than seven reigning European royalties and one American

President have been murdered, and many others have been hounded from their kingdoms. Communism rules Russia, Austria and Hungary, and is creeping across Spain and Germany. Only one great nation still has its King sitting secure on his throne; and that, by the Grace of God and the unsleeping eye of the Special Branch, is England.

And even in England there are anarchist agents for ever going restlessly to and fro in Limehouse or the West End offering wads of crinkling notes or a "shot" of cocaine as payment for shooting this statesman or bombing that one. Even in England there are to-day a dozen people who never know whether the man who approaches them on the pavement may not hold a knife in the hand he conceals in his overcoat, or that the morning correspondence may not suddenly blow up the breakfast table and all who are seated at it. There has been a sleepy silence lately, and the Yard will try to keep it so; but in the nature of things not many more years can go by without their peace being shattered by the roar of a bomb whose manufacture has in some way escaped our official notice.

CHAPTER II

I wait on Lenin and Trotsky—Lenin rebukes me for clumsiness, just like a capitalist!—What I heard in the cupboard—What Lenin suggested for England—Some fun with the Foreign Barbers.

EARLY in 1905, two years after I joined the Special Department, I was called into a little bare office at Scotland Yard and told that a certain very famous Inspector wanted to see me. He was turning over some papers, and he nodded cheerfully to me as I entered.

"Ever heard of the Foreign Barbers of London?" he asked quietly. I shook my head, so he put another question. "Know anything about Vladimir Uljanoff?" I was stumped again. He told me to sit down.

"You'll hear quite a lot about that young gentleman if you live long enough," he said. "Listen. Some years ago, his brother was shot in St. Petersburg for trying to bomb the Russian Chief of Police. That made Vladimir turn nasty; and he got sent to Siberia himself for trying to improve on his brother's failure. He has just escaped from Siberia. He's in London at this moment, and he's going to attend a trade meeting of the Foreign Barbers in Islington to-morrow. Now that man's dangerous, and we've got to know just what he's up to. I want you to go along and find out."

We went into details, and I discovered the rather alarming fact that the meeting was to be quite a small one, and that in no way could I possibly go disguised, for every man attending it was a notable anarchist. I had been chosen to go because I could speak four languages fluently; I was

then only a Detective-Constable, and I wanted promotion, so I went off to see what could be done. The landlord of the inn where the meeting was to be held proved to be a loyal man enough, and he showed me the room where the conference was to take place. In the wall was a cupboard, very narrow and airless, and so small that only by cramping myself almost double could I get into it. However, it was the best thing there was; and, a quarter of an hour before the "barbers" were due, I climbed into that awful little press and the landlord shut the doors. His footsteps died away, and I put up a short prayer that the anarchists would not come prying into the cupboard before they started to talk.

After a long wait, I heard two people ascending the stairs, and they entered the room and began talking in low, guttural Russian. Then one of them stood by the door; and as other steps mounted the stair, he opened the door a few inches and took from each as password the English word "Liberty" before he admitted him to the room. I counted twenty-four people in all, and then the door was closed and I heard the lock click into place.

There was some shuffling while chairs were drawn round the table, and then a deep, harsh voice called on Comrade Max Muller.

"In ten years," announced the new speaker triumphantly, after making various astonishing statements about communist activities in Germany, "the people will be ready, and the cursed Hohenzollern will be a prisoner in his own palace."

I remember smiling as I heard the words; little did I know then how nearly they would come true in 1918, when the world's greatest autocrat would be forced to flee to save his life from his own people.

The harsh voice broke in impatiently that ten years were

long to wait. The next speaker was a Russian army officer, who said that the Russian troops were willing to follow any leader who showed strength, but that, although there was disaffection among them, there was also personal love of the Tsar, and that he advised delay in the proposed revolution till more work had been done among them. It was the first I had heard of the "proposed revolution," and I listened eagerly.

There were other speakers who said little of importance, and then one concluded his speech by saying that they would like to hear the views of Comrade Boroff before going further. And then the harsh voice began to speak.

"No need here for me to keep up that disguise," it said scornfully. "Boroff is a cloak—I am Vladimir Uljanoff!"

I could hear short breaths, scuffling of feet and whispering. Then the voice went on again. The man who was speaking—the man the whole world afterwards knew as Lenin the Dictator—was as merciless and as bloody-minded then as his deeds afterwards showed him to be. While he spoke, I crammed and crouched in my cupboard, and listened eagerly to his burning words.

"It must be bloodshed—bloodshed on a colossal scale. My comrades here have advocated politics. I say politics are useless to us. We must revolt, and when we revolt there shall be no mercy. We shall think of our brothers shot and hanged at the caprice of the nobles, or sent to rot in Siberia. The Tsar, princes, dukes, police, civil servants, shopkeepers—all must perish. In Russia first, and then from one side of Europe to the other. It is the bourgeoisie we must fear, in Russia, in Germany, in England. When the day comes, they must perish, down to the man who keeps a stall in the street!"

That was the gist of his speech. There was a fierce burst of cheering, and such was the passionate magnetism

of the man's voice that it would have incited a multitude to madness. Excited discussions broke out, fists were thumped on the table, and in the general uproar I tried to move a little to ease my aching limbs. And then I discovered a new factor. The air in the cupboard was so horribly close, and so great had been the strain of my position, that, as I tried to move, my head seemed to spin and my body felt light and volatile. I pricked myself sharply with a knife to prevent myself from collapsing. The stab of pain revived me, but in reaching for the knife in my pocket my foot slipped and came down sharply from a joist on to the broken bottom of the cupboard.

Instantly the hubbub in the room was silent.

"What was that?" said the voice of the German, Muller. In that moment, it was indeed lucky for me that Lenin and Muller had been all the time in disagreement.

"The comrade's nerves are, as I thought, a little timorous," sneered the Russian, "that he turns so white at the sound of a rat in the woodwork."

There was a laugh, someone else said that these old inns were full of rats, and conversation began again. Somehow I managed to remain still for the rest of the time, and finally they broke up, after arranging a meeting for the following week at another public house in Islington. When eventually I climbed out of that cupboard my back was bent like a cripple's and I had to sit down for a long time before I could walk.

The next meeting was to take place on May Day—Labour Day—and once more I was told to attend. But the room this time had no convenient cupboard; the only way I could see was to disguise myself as a waiter and actually serve the anarchists with my own hands. Once more the landlord was a friend of law and order; and when the day came, I shaved off my policeman's moustache (of which I was

very proud), took a napkin over my arm, and carried a tray of drinks into the room.

There were twenty-eight men seated around the long table, and the man at the head of it was respectfully addressed as Comrade Boroff. It was my first sight of him—a smooth-headed, oval-faced, narrow-eyed, typical Jew, with a devilish sureness in every line of his powerful magnetic face. Beside him was a different type of Jew, the kind one might see in any Soho shop, strong-nosed, sallow-faced, long-moustached, with a little tuft of beard wagging from his chin and a great shock of wild hair—Leiba Bronstein, afterwards Lev Trotsky.

There were drinks to be served, and as I put them on the table I accidentally knocked several copies of the agenda and rules, which lay in a pile by Lenin's elbow, on to the floor, and then stooped in haste and embarrassment to pick them up.

"Clumsy fool!" hissed Lenin, for all the world as though he were one of the damned aristocrats; and terrified at the sound of his voice the trembling waiter dropped his napkin on top of the fallen papers. And as he picked them up again, which is more to the point, he managed to smuggle one into the folds of the linen and retain it. I have always counted that bit of sleight-of-hand, done under twenty-eight pairs of eyes accustomed to pit themselves against the Tsar's secret police, as one of the best things I have ever done.

Ten minutes later, the paper was on its way to Scotland Yard, and I was back again at my labours with the drinks. And I must say that those anarchists could put away their liquor like men! I listened carefully through the open fanlight to all sorts of revolutionary speeches, in which most of the speakers repeated with emphasis what I had heard at the previous meeting; but with this difference,

that there was a definite leaning this time towards Comrade Lenin's more cut-throat ideas of revolt. I made my notes with more comfort, having only to stand on a chair and apply my ear to the fanlight to hear perfectly. At the end of the meeting I took a considerable risk by laying my napkin on a copy of the minutes of the meeting and taking it away with me, but fortunately no one noticed the loss, each doubtless supposing that someone else had pocketed the document.

The next meeting was held a couple of days later at a public house in Great Portland Street, and once more I was told to go. This time I was worried about my disguise, for the waiter who had been so clumsy in Islington would certainly have been recognized. So I went along to a certain famous theatrical wig-maker, had my hair cropped and put on a fair wig, and had my face scientifically altered so that, looking in the glass, I could hardly believe that the reflection was really my own.

I did not dare to try to get any papers this time, but I was in the room a good deal, and I overheard most of what was said while I was outside it. That meeting was an historic one, for at the end of it, after Lenin and Trotsky had made passionate speeches, every sentence of which was wildly applauded, a ballot was taken on the advisability of an immediate revolution in Russia. Twenty-one members voted for it and seven for its postponement.

After the results were announced, Lenin rose, in an impressive silence.

"Comrades of the Revolution," he said, his voice shaking with emotion, "I have waited and served all my life for this hour. My brother died for it. Within the next few months, in Russia, we shall sweep out our oppressors on a tide of blood. And then Germany, Italy, France, England shall follow. In ten years from to-day, perhaps, the whole

world shall be free, and the people shall possess the earth."

Everyone knows the sequel. There was the great Russian General Strike of 1905, when the whole nation was cut off from the rest of the civilized world. Two Russian battleships mutinied, there were mutinies in the Army, and Government succeeded Government as the Tsar was forced from one capitulation to another. The Tsarist regime rocked to its foundations, and recovered only partially that it might go crashing to its fall during the Great War.

As far as I was concerned, the sequel was more pleasant, for I was subsequently promoted to Detective-Sergeant, and given an opportunity to rise still further. There was one other echo a good deal later. A photograph was shown me at the Yard of a man who was suspected of anarchist activities. A policeman has always a pretty good memory for faces, and after a minute's thought I remembered his name. He was one of the foremost revolutionary speakers of the so-called Foreign Barbers. I went along to have a talk with him, and pretty soon discovered that his comrades in Russia had sent him over here with several thousand pounds to aid the funds in this country.

The man was duly deported, with instructions not to show himself on English soil again. Up to the present he has not done so; if and when he does, either I or someone else will recognize him. I have a definite feeling that he will turn up again some day.

CHAPTER III

Maxim Gorky comes to London—The end of Marie Derval—Leone Povinelli pays the price—A private printing press—Karpovitch hides in Pimlico—Plotting the Tsar's death and the Kaiser's murder.

TURNING again the first somewhat yellowed leaves of my case-books, I find one of the first names of revolutionary note that occurs there is that of Maxim Gorki. But even before I came into contact with the Prophet of the Revolution I had played a minor part in one or two adventures which showed me that anarchism was a vital force.

In April 1906, Mr. Balfour handed us some letters he had received, demanding that he should immediately pay £5,000 by registered post to an address in Chemnitz. The letters were signed "The Black Hand of Europe and America," endorsed with a crudely executed sketch in Indian ink of a hand holding a dripping dagger, and they threatened murder within six months if the blackmail was not paid. Swift action followed, both in England and abroad; a twenty-year old compositor in England was arrested and convicted, and the guard round Mr. Balfour strengthened.

One other interesting case in 1906 was the arrest of a Russian Jew suspected of being in league with an extremist agent here and attempting to plot a bombing outrage. In the court the old man—a queer, wizened, monkey-like creature—broke down in tears, and startled everyone by sobbing that he was the Wandering Jew, that for two

thousand years he had been tramping the world longing to die, and that he had embroiled himself in all sorts of anarchist attempts in the hope of being executed. He was sentenced to a few days' detention as a rogue and vagabond, and crying out that he had told Christ to move on and that now he must move on for ever, he was led away to the cells.

It was early in May 1907, that I first saw Maxim Gorki in London. There had been during that year a number of meetings of anarchists whom the Yard had under observation, some of them held in the parks, some in houses, and one or two in churches on weekdays. And then it came to our knowledge that a great congress was to be held secretly in an East London hall, and I was detailed to attend.

The meeting was again nominally a gathering of the Foreign Barbers of London. In order to gain "atmosphere," I was made up for my part by a certain foreign barber, not a member of the organization; and with what the Yard had been able to tell me and my own knowledge of German, Russian and French, I felt fairly safe as I gave the secret handshake at the door and passed into the congress hall. Gorki was already on the platform—a moderate-sized man, very white-faced, with greeny-grey quick eyes, a dark brown moustache and greying hair. Other speakers climbed up beside him, and finally the doors were closed and a couple of burly guards stood by them.

Gorki began to speak. In a dreamy tone, he told of the sufferings of exiles in Siberia and of terrified peasants in Russia. There were among his comrades, he said, many who advocated bloody revolution. But he was for milder measures. Only world censure could come of any attempt to murder the Tsar and his family. They must be peacefully deposed.

The hall filled with shouts and hisses. A big, shaggy man sprang to his feet on the platform and began to sing a deep, thrilling dirge. Other voices joined; soon the whole hall was throbbing with music. It was the forbidden funeral anthem for executed nihilists and Siberian exiles, and so instinct was it with hate and determination that I shivered.

A short, square, rough-headed man was on his feet on the platform, his piercing eyes darting over the hall. "Comrade Trotsky!" went the whisper from mouth to mouth. It was indeed my anarchist acquaintance of two years before. And he at least was thirsty for blood. He snarled as he spoke; his big hands clenched and shook. Other speakers followed; eighteen-year old girls with long black plaits were the most bloodthirsty of all. They had lost fathers, brothers, lovers, mothers. When the meeting ended, I heard for the first time the singing of the "Red Flag."

It was at this time that I was called to a Pimlico lodging-house where a suicide had just taken place, and I saw there another sidelight on anarchism. A young woman lay crumpled on the floor, a bullet through her head and a revolver clutched in her hand. Examination of her papers proved beyond doubt that she was Marie Derval, known and feared in Russia as Helene de Krebel. In her short life she had first become notable through her marriage, when still a young girl, to Tscherkesoff, the famous Russian agitator. This was an anarchist marriage, to be dissolved at the will of either party. But Marie, after faithfully serving the anarchist cause for a year, was deserted by her "husband." She had never expected that her love would be scorned.

Mad with rage and hate, she went straight to the Tsar's secret police, taking documents which condemned Tscher-

kesoff and many of his friends. There were hangings in St. Petersburg, but her "husband" escaped to America. Although no one could prove that Marie had turned traitor, many suspected; and to force her hand she was chosen to assassinate a famous Russian General. Realizing that the game was up (she had been hoping to lure Tscherkesoff back to Russia), she went to the police, exposed a number of anarchist plans, including an elaborate plot against the Tsar's life, and then herself fled to America. She shadowed her betrayer through the United States, England, France, America and France again. But ever closer to her own heels were the avenging bloodhounds of the Revolutionaries.

In Paris, she went out to try to shoot Tscherkesoff, missed him, and returned to find that three men had called at her flat, and promised to return later. Without even waiting to pack, she fled to London. A last passionate love-letter to her "husband" was still among her papers when I found her. Whether she still loved him or was merely trying to lure him also to death, whether she had killed herself in fear of her pursuers or in despair of regaining her lost love, no one ever knew.

Towards the end of the same year I took part in a raid on a basement in Shepherd's Bush. The gentleman who owned that basement had been known to us and patiently watched for fourteen years; he was famous as the secretary of a revolutionary society. There had been many secret meetings in that cellar of his, and more than one Siberian refugee had been sheltered there. But until a few days before our raid he had not actually contravened British law. Then, however, we found a very workmanlike little printing press, and also quite a notable haul of books inciting Russian peasants to revolt, Russian soldiers and sailors to mutiny, and so on. Our man himself was not quite quick

enough in his attempt to escape from the country, and suffered accordingly.

It was in the January of 1907 that the next case of anarchist murder took place. A young Italian, Leone Povinelli, was found one morning on Plumstead Marshes, a foreign revolver by his side and a hole in his forehead. He was known to have been connected with an anarchist organization in London; otherwise he had no troubles, was a cheery youth, and had enough money for his needs. We could not bring home the crime to his murderers, but a good deal of suspicion pointed to two men who had left the country on the night the murder took place. Communist organizations abroad, however, are too intricate and widespread to give much chance of bringing home any serious crime to them, once their members leave England.

The next revolutionary agent with whom I came in touch was a man whose name at that time was known throughout the world. Early in 1907 this man was chosen by ballot to assassinate General Bogalieff and his staff, and he did it with cold-blooded ferocity. He was captured and tried in Russia, and his comrades served every judge in the case with a death sentence to come into effect if the murderer was condemned. The judges were afraid, and temporized by sending the murderer to Siberia, but the death sentences were carried out just the same on every one of them!

On April 12th, as the prison wagons dragged their way across the steppes towards the Siberian mines, the prisoner swallowed a powerful emetic, and shortly afterwards was judged too ill to travel. A small group of anarchists, disguised as a relief party of soldiers, took over the guard of the wagon in which he was placed, and secretly cut the legs of the horses drawing it, and rubbed camphor in the cuts to make the horses limp. This wagon, with

the disguised "guards," dropped behind the rest; the driver was murdered, and the political prisoner and his friends headed for Japan with a fresh relay of horses left some miles back along the trail.

But secret Tsarist agents were on their tracks, and they fled from Japan through the East to England, where for a time this man, whom we will call Karpovitch, lay hidden in the heart of Pimlico. I saw his landlady and searched his room to make sure that he was the man we suspected; but he never came back to that address. The landlady, who said her lodger was "a nice, quiet gentleman, very regular with the rent, rather tall and very afraid of strangers," reported that two foreigners had called the night before my visit, and been shown up to the room he occupied. She was certain that he was in there, having heard him moving about a few minutes earlier, but when she opened the door the room was empty. The visitors wanted to wait, but the faithful landlady would not trust them, and threatened to call a policeman. Finally, they went away; and Karpovitch was never seen again, as far as I know. The landlady told me he had a watch-chain of which he was very proud, and which seemed to her to be made of little bullets. That identified my man without a doubt; for Karpovitch always wore a chain made of the revolver bullets with which he had murdered General Bogaliess and his staff. The bullets had been strung on a silver wire by a friend in St. Petersburg who paid the penalty of his action with his life; and Karpovitch swore that he would always wear the chain till he could use the bullets from it to destroy his friend's slayers.

In the years 1906 and 1907 London seems to have been the world's storm-centre of anarchism. Hardly a month went by without one or other of the recognized Russian leaders seeking refuge there or coming over to address a

meeting of the more important comrades. More mild in their views but equally earnest, famous people in England were successful in attracting enormous attention to themselves by lending their names to various socialist causes: a well-known peeress wrote from the Ritz Hotel, sending £15 to a workers' organization; a distinguished author's photograph appeared everywhere bearing the caption—"The Dramatist of the Movement"; and the Special Department hurried to and fro, searching houses, collecting evidence, listening to incendiary speakers, and trying to treat the Jews, Russians and Italians who came over here to stir up strife and unhappiness in our peaceful land as leniently as possible, while still rendering all their activities impotent.

CHAPTER IV

When Lapidus and Hefeld ran amok in London—How the murderers were trapped—The murder of Sir William Wyllie and Dr. Lalcaca—The anarchists behind the murders.

EARLY in 1906, three notable anarchists fled from Russia to escape what was then known as "Stolypin's Necktie," a slang term for the punishment of hanging, which M. Stolypin was then freely dealing out to agitators in St. Petersburg. As always occurs when a communist of note moves from one place to another, the Yard was informed; but as it happened, the fugitives went first to Paris. The next thing the world heard of them was that, on May Day (Labour Day) 1907, they had made an abortive attempt to assassinate the President of France. It was one of those curiously just cases when a would-be murderer was almost literally hoist with his own petard. The three men, Peter and Jacob Lapidus and Paul Hefeld, were skulking along a boulevard where the President's coach was expected to pass. Suddenly, there was the roar of an explosion, Jacob Lapidus was flung to the ground, Hefeld driven staggering backwards, and Peter Lapidus literally blown to pieces by the premature explosion of the bomb in his pocket. The two accomplices, running into the crowd that gathered, escaped the gendarmerie and fled to a hiding-place in the Latin quarter.

In the January of 1909 the career of these two men was terminated when they paid the penalty of their violence in this country.

A messenger from a Tottenham factory was sent one

morning in a car, driven by a chauffeur, to get £85 in gold and notes from the bank for payments to employees. He got the money successfully, and was just alighting from the car with it outside the premises of his own firm when a burly, dark-faced young man jumped at him from the pavement, knocked him down and snatched the bag of money. It was Jacob Lapidus. The man turned to run, but in a moment the chauffeur ran at him and flung his arms about him. Had he been unarmed, that might have been enough, but he immediately brought down a heavy revolver butt on the chauffeur's head and sent him to the ground.

A gas stoker named Smith who was approaching, saw the struggle and its termination, and although he was threatened with the business end of the revolver, struck at Lapidus with his fist, but missed him. Then Lapidus lost his head, and fired at point-blank range at his new attacker. The bullet went through Smith's jacket without even searing him, and Lapidus, now joined by Hefeld, raced away along the pavement, followed by a couple of men and a boy.

Another factor came into the drama. A passing car, seeing the chase, joined in and was overhauling the bandits when Hefeld turned in his tracks and sent a bullet smashing through the windscreen. The driver swerved wildly, but continued the pursuit. Then, when he was only twenty yards behind them, both men turned and fired a volley of bullets, which, although missing the driver, disabled the car.

The shots had brought a policeman, P.C. Tyler, from point duty, and he led the race after the two men, who were by this time not far ahead, still stubbornly carrying the bag of money. P.C. Tyler paid for his bravery with his life, for Lapidus, hearing feet overtaking him, turned

suddenly round and from a distance of about four yards shot him through the neck.

At this juncture, shocked by the policeman's fall, the pursuers might have fallen back enough to let the men escape, but for the fearlessness of a boy, Joseph Joscelyne. This lad closed in on Hefeld, who was lagging and running very heavily, and the men behind him, not to be outdone by a boy, joined the chase again. But Hefeld also was armed; Joscelyne, reaching out, touched him on the back as he ran, and Hefeld, turning in his stride, put a bullet in his brain.

This time there was no hesitation. With a roar of fury, the crowd came pelting at the murderers' heels; Lapidus had disappeared ahead, but this man at least should not escape. Suddenly Hefeld—he was only twenty-one and absolutely maddened with fear—saw a policeman ahead of him, heading him off. He turned desperately and tried to climb a fence into a garden beside him, but his breath was gone and he was exhausted. He slipped, fell on to the pavement, saw the policeman jumping at him, turned his revolver to his own forehead and shot himself. He was still alive when he reached hospital, but died the same night.

Meanwhile, I was on the trail of Jacob Lapidus. A police cordon had been drawn round the district in which he disappeared, and I made various inquiries about the two men and their mode of living. It was easy to find out that they had been connected with various anarchist clubs in the neighbourhood, and before long I had identified them as the men who had escaped from Paris two years before and come under false names to England.

That evening police knocked at the door of a Walthamstow cottage, and very warily prepared to enter. There was no reply, so they knocked again. As if in answer, there came from within the sound of a revolver shot, a

grunt and a scuffle. The shot was not fired through the door, which was locked. The police forced an entrance. A paraffin lamp was burning in the little bare room; on the floor, in a crumpled heap, lay Jacob Lapidus, anarchist, thief and murderer—dead by his own hand.

Once more, these men were tools of more cautious foreign agitators who were really working for revolution in this country. Everything pointed to the fact that the men had been, in effect, blackmailed by threats of exposure in connection with their past crimes, and ordered to attempt to seize the messenger's bag of gold, which was then to be handed over to the anarchist society which was putting pressure upon them. Money was urgently needed to pay wages to certain agents; the fact that the lives of Lapidus and Hefeld were lost in the attempt was nothing to the men really responsible. Unfortunately, here again, we could not bring home the blame to the cowards who should have suffered.

One hot summer afternoon in 1909, an "At Home" was held at the Imperial Institute, South Kensington, and a number of people interested in reforms for India attended. After it was over, two of its most distinguished visitors, Lieutenant-Colonel Sir William Hutt Curzon-Wyllie, K.C.I.E., C.V.O., aide-de-camp to Viscount Morley (who was then Secretary of State for India), and Dr. Cawas Lalacaca, a Parsee of considerable influence in India, were descending the broad stairs of the Institute together, discussing the events of the afternoon. Sir William was notably like Lord Curzon, for whom he was sometimes mistaken.

Lady Wyllie had gone to get her wraps. Unnoticed in the bustle of departing guests, a young Indian student ran suddenly up the stairs towards the two descending men. An attendant called some unintelligible warning, but before

anyone could move the student had whipped out a revolver and fired all six chambers at point-blank range at Sir William's head and body. One bullet entered his eye, another went beneath his other eye, and one pierced Dr. Lalcaca in the side. Both men collapsed on the stairs, and the student, swiftly turning the revolver muzzle against his forehead, pulled the trigger. It fell with a click; the magazine had been emptied.

Guests on the stairs turned, shouting, and in a moment the murderer was fiercely gripped in a dozen pairs of hands and his weapon torn away. The horrified onlookers bent over the fallen men, but their help had come too late. Sir William was already dead—had, indeed, been killed instantly; and Dr. Lalcaca, although he was still breathing when they got him to St. George's Hospital a few minutes later, expired almost immediately afterwards.

Meanwhile, the student began some smiling explanation, but was roughly shaken into silence. Then came the crowning tragedy of the affair. Lady Wyllie, returning with her wraps, saw someone lying on the stair. She had heard the shots, and guessed that murder had been done. She ran to the side of the prostrate figure, anxious to lend any aid she could.

"Oh, the poor man!" she cried pitifully; and then suddenly realized that it was her husband.

A number of Indians who were present broke down completely and wept at the scene. Lady Wyllie was assisted away, and the young murderer, still complacent, was given in charge. On his way to the cells, and later again at his trial, he was perfectly composed. He gave the name of Madan Lal Dhingra, stated that he was a Hindu, and that he had killed Sir William in mistake for Lord Curzon of Kedleston, who, he said, was "an enemy of India's freedom." He claimed coolly that he had made

"an honest mistake," and that in any case the murder was "a political misdemeanour," for which the only punishment that could be awarded was a term of imprisonment. Never have I seen so confident a murderer.

The horror which all England felt at the outrage was deepened by facts which I was forced to mention at the trial. Dhingra's two brothers had both been students in England some years earlier. Hearing that their brother was getting into the company of Indian agitators and political extremists connected with Krishnavarma, the famous exponent of political murder of pre-War days, they had actually written to Sir William, knowing his sympathy with Indians and his readiness to interest himself on their behalf, and asked him to try to help the young man. Sir William had made a number of inquiries as to his whereabouts, but had failed to discover his address, and a letter asking for more particulars was actually in the post when the boy he wished to help put two bullets through his brain.

The trial was a dramatic one. I remember to this day Dhingra's dark, smiling face as he reaffirmed that "his comrades" had assured him that he could not be hanged for his crime. As the hours wore on, and the hard eyes of the jurymen considered him, he grew a little nervous, and drummed his slender fingers on the side of the witness-box, while he looked sharply and nervously about him. He put up no defence except that he had committed a political crime, but at the last moment certain influential people in this country persuaded his counsel to enter a plea of insanity, at which the prisoner smiled broadly. The idea was a good one, but it did not save him.

When the foreman of the Jury had announced the decision and the Judge assumed the Black Cap, Dhingra's face went sickly pale. "But this is murder, honoured sir—

murder!" he gasped painfully, as if he could not believe his ears. A few days later, public notice of his hanging was posted up as a warning to those who had deceived him and egged him on, and also to those poor dupes like him who let themselves be used to do tasks which the instigators fear to do themselves.

One of the most regrettable features of political crime is the way in which anarchist leaders swindle and lie to coloured men, in the hope of making them their instruments. An Indian or Egyptian in England feels a certain racial uneasiness and embarrassment in this country, and when a revolutionary agent slyly stirs up those feelings till they become a festering sore, and then flatters and kow-tows to him, he is easily led on to "strike a noble blow for the cause of freedom," as the agitator puts it. Any sort of plausible lie about outrages in British colonies is trotted out by the tempter, and the victim is persuaded to drink quantities of cheap whisky under the pretence that it is a sociable thing to do. Natives cannot stand intoxicants in quantity, and soon, between alcohol, adulation and inflammatory sham-patriotic sentiments, the coloured man is ready to do anything his "friends" suggest. And then the usual thing happens—the miserable instrument suffers, and those who instigated the crime and who are totally morally responsible titter and rub their hands and go looking for another coloured fool who can be similarly used.

CHAPTER V

The Gardstein murders—The armoury at the murderer's house, and what it was meant for—Malatesta visits us—His history and activities in connection with Great Britain—A letter from Peter the Painter.

I HAVE mentioned in my last chapter that robbery was commonly resorted to when anarchist agitators ran out of funds in this country. To these men, any form of violence or law-breaking seems to give satisfaction; they appear to suffer from a kind of inferiority-complex which can only be satiated by committing an outrage against the laws they affect to despise. In the same way, small boys are apt to put their fingers to their noses when the schoolmaster's back is turned. In the December of 1910, there was a very flagrant case showing the anarchist's callousness of human life and rat-like readiness to turn and bite when disturbed at his nefarious activities.

A policeman on point duty, noticing that the door of a Houndsditch shop had been forced open, blew his whistle and entered. Three burglars came from inside and ran at him, knocked him down and escaped to the street, but found two other constables coming up, one from each end of the street. The thieves were trapped, and after a swift look round, they ran a hundred yards towards the more distant of the two officers and then suddenly disappeared into a house. The constable who had been knocked down was now on their trail and the three met outside the door into which the fugitives had disappeared. The door was

locked, but the lock was soon broken in, and the officers entered the pitch-dark passage.

Next moment, a fusillade of shots rang out, and all three constables fell dead, shot at point-blank range by a Mauser automatic revolver. Having made sure that their victims were dead, the authors of this cold-blooded outrage gathered together everything they thought could incriminate them and fled from the house.

The case was immediately put into the hands of Superintendent Wensley, under whom I was then serving, and who was one of the greatest detectives the Yard has ever known. An examination of the house where the murders were committed, 9 Exchange Buildings, Houndsditch, gave us some remarkable clues. In an upper room was a cylinder of gas weighing half a hundredweight, whose contents were evidently used by the anarchists in the preparation of tear-bombs. There was also a very complete and modern burglar's equipment, including modern jemmies, saws, skeleton keys, nitro-glycerine for blowing in safe-doors, drills, clamps, punches, braces and bits, and augers made of specially tempered steel. The outfit could not have cost much less than £100 to make. More important still, there were clues that led us to believe that the late tenant had belonged to an East End Lettish Anarchist League then in disrepute because it had come under suspicion in connection with the recent Tottenham outrage in which Lapidus and Hefeld were concerned.

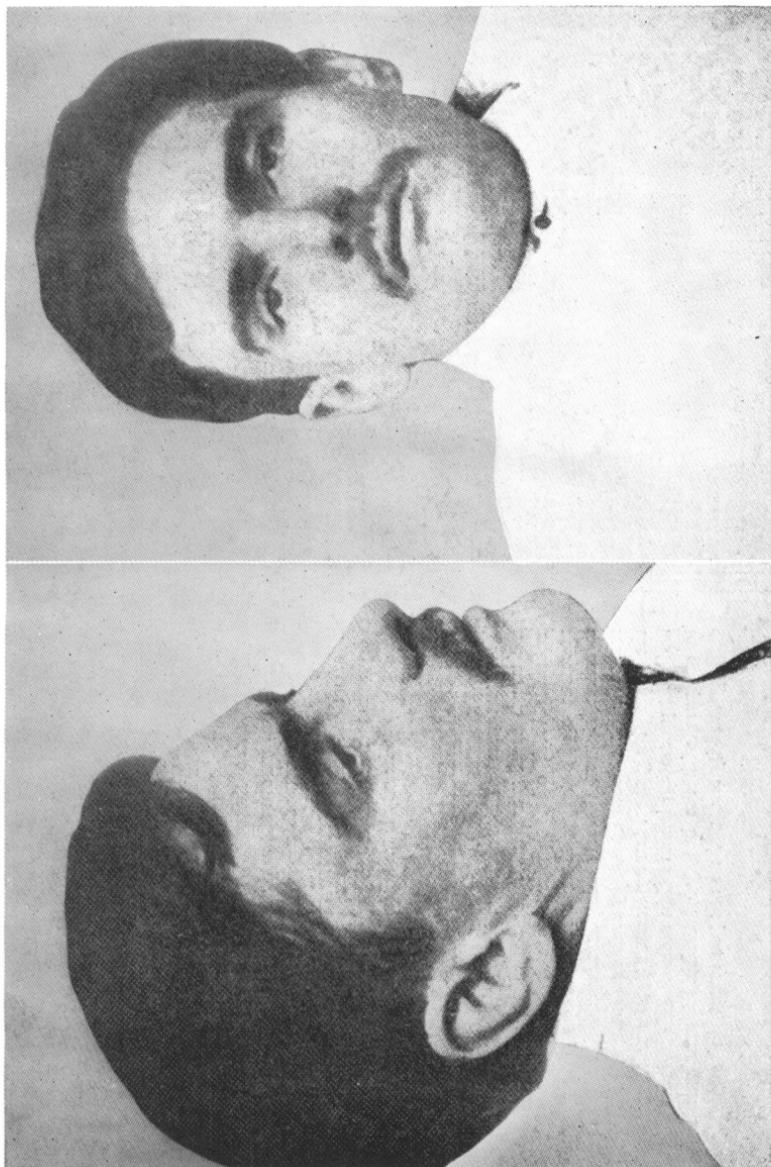
Enquiries at this League elicited the fact that several members had disappeared suddenly on the night of the murder. Levi Goldberg (or Gardstein) and three other wanted men were missing, and the whole organization of the Yard was put on to discover them. They were formerly sailor-smugglers, and for a time it was feared that they might have stowed away aboard some outward-bound

vessel from the Pool. A number of lines of enquiry were followed up; some ended in blanks, but before many hours had passed, three of the men were detained by the police, while the fourth, Gardstein himself, who it was then believed had actually fired the shots, had attempted to take his own life, and died of his injuries just prior to his arrest, at a little house in Grove Street, Stepney; and when we searched that house, we received a real surprise that such a place could have been equipped under our very eyes and without our knowledge. For the place was a veritable armoury; it contained weapons of all descriptions, and there was not the slightest doubt that the Houndsditch murders had put a premature end to a plot for more armed raids on property in the heart of London. At that time, and for months previously, there had been a suspicious gathering of foreign agitators in the metropolis, and though they were under police supervision, it appears that they contemplated similar coups. Who Gardstein really was we did not discover. Like most other anarchists, he had a confusing number of aliases; but his death was certainly a great blow to anarchist hopes in this country, for shortly afterwards most of the other known agitators went abroad again.

At his Stepney house, we discovered numbers of chemicals and explosives such as nitric acid, sulphuric acid, nitro-glycerine, glass bottles and retorts similar to those used on the Continent for bomb-manufacture, and several privately printed books giving detailed instructions on the manufacture of infernal machines and bombs, with pencilled marginal notes in the dead man's hand that left not the least doubt of his own recent activities. There was also a cartridge belt containing 150 dum-dum Mauser revolver bullets (the soft-nosed variety which spread as they strike, tearing a gaping hole in their victim, and which are expressly forbidden by all civilized war conventions), over 600

HOUNDSDITCH MURDERS

Two photographs of the mysterious foreigner ("Gardstein") who was found mortally wounded in a house in Grove Street,
off Commercial Road, London, E.



ordinary loose cartridges, some with the noses notched to make them spread like dum-dums, quantities of daggers, knives and old Mauser rifles, and over a hundred revolvers.

A most interesting sequel to this case was that, a week or two after the outrage, a letter was received by a famous and reputable London newspaper, condemning the murderers in unqualified terms, and saying that the writer had had nothing whatever to do with the people responsible for the outrage, and only trusted that they might be brought to justice. That letter was signed "Peter the Painter." It was proved beyond a doubt to have been genuine, by means of a microscopic examination of the signature, which was compared with an authentic one. The letter had no address on it, but bore a Russian stamp and postmark.

The case had another sequel, by reason of which I crossed the trail, for the first and last time in my life, of the famous Enrico Malatesta, Sicilian Count of ancient family, uncompromising anarchist, and at that time said to be leader of a powerful group of anarchists in this country. The cylinder of gas found by the police at the Houndsditch house was freely alleged by certain newspapers at the time to have been supplied by Malatesta. Actually, those rumours were quite unfounded; but they grew up because we had instructions at the time that Malatesta was believed to be in England, and that we must see to it that his movements were above suspicion, as he was generally believed to be a very dangerous man.

All his life, this strange nobleman had been a stormy petrel. Heir to great estates in Sicily, he had early become a fanatical disciple of communism in its better sense, and was genuine enough to divide up his estates and arrange

for their administration entirely for the benefit of the oppressed peasants who lived on them. Thereafter, he had travelled all over the world preaching communism and plotting for an imaginary ideal of equality. Constantly in trouble with the forces of recognized authority, and dangerously outspoken at abuses of anarchist principles by unscrupulous agitator leaders, his liberty was always threatened and even his life was unsafe. But luck was with him, and for his miraculous escapes from danger he won the title of the Man with Nine Lives.

His was a striking face. Swarthy, black-haired, black-bearded, tall, with burning dark eyes, he was handsome, sinister and menacing. He was fearless to a point of foolhardiness, and had not been long in England before he was arrested on a charge of libel. He pleaded boldly that the words he had spoken had been true in substance, but the case went against him, and in the end he left the country.

Where he went, I do not know. Several countries had already closed their ports to him because of his inflammatory speeches and activities, and he made it a point of honour not to claim any help from his Sicilian estates. Nor was he a popular figure among anarchist leaders, because his bitter tongue was always ready to flay them for unscrupulous means which they employed, considering them justified by the ends they had in view, but which Malatesta said were dishonouring to the cause of communism.

During his career, this strange man had spent several years in foreign prisons, and had thrice been sentenced to death, each time escaping by breaking prison and safely eluding the authorities who pursued him. Just before coming to England, he had been imprisoned on the island of Lampedusa in the Mediterranean, to serve a life sentence. He had managed to smuggle into his cell a small stone-

breaking tool, with which he picked and wrenched a hole large enough to admit his body. One stormy night he clambered through it, made his way to the harbour, swam out to a tiny fishing smack which was riding at anchor, and succeeded in navigating it himself as far as Malta in a sea in which practised seamen refused to put out in pursuit because of its danger.

It will, perhaps, never be known how near this country has at various times been to revolutionary outbreaks. The sound sense of the British working man was then, as it is now, an absolute preventive of any revolution; such a thing would outrage all our national feelings and sentiments. But let it be remembered that, in such places as Russia and Austria, the desires of the multitude were not taken into consideration when the standard of revolt was raised by self-seeking agitators. So, in pre-War England, it might have been that solitary outbreaks might have occurred time after time, sponsored but not attended by cowardly anarchists from other lands, and the lives wasted in them would have been those of British workmen, misled by communist tommy-rot, and British policemen trying to save the public from looting, outrage and murder.

I am not able, because of the Official Secrets Acts, to mention all the dramatic coups which took place between 1910 and 1914, the sudden arrests of "undesirable aliens" who were subsequently imprisoned or deported, the constant connection between brutal murders and big robberies; or to tell more about the anarchist spiders who moved to and fro spinning their webs from various of our big towns, only to find the flimsy fabrics broken by the police, and, when possible, the silly dupes who were caught in them released before they had paid some dire penalty for their credulity.

But this at least I may say, that when the nation-wide

call rang out after the Serajevo murders, also planned and executed by anarchists, and the agitators in Great Britain settled down, as they thought, to work woe to our country when she could least protect herself, when Scotland Yard was busy with spy detection and capture and when the volcanic fires of conflict would spew up all sorts of nervous wrecks and bad characters, those agitators got a grievous shock. Scotland Yard was, indeed, busy elsewhere; but the restless and the discontented and the underdogs who had until then been ready to listen to any traitor's talk about revolution dropped, from midnight on August 4th, every private grudge and complaint. The anarchists who went rejoicing among them, calling them "Comrades" and inviting them to strike at their country in her hour of need, were received with abuse, threats and finally with violence. As I shall show in my chapters on anarchism during the War, the agitators did not by any means stop their activities; but the sort of reception they got may be judged by the following little incident, told me by a fellow detective at Christmas, 1914.

He was going home one evening along a crowded Cricklewood street when he saw a man running for his life before a shouting, boo-ing mob, mostly composed of women. My friend raced along in their wake, in order to try to prevent what he thought to be some sort of outrage. He did not overtake them, however, till they were well along Edgware Road, beside the Welsh Harp, and then only because they caught their man. Pushing his way through the crowd, now some hundreds strong, he breathlessly asked what was the matter.

"Matter?" panted a big, bony woman with a shopping basket on one arm; "he's been addressin' a meetin' to say that now's the time ter down the King because the boys is all away at the Front! We're goin' to duck him, that's

what's the matter; an' if you try to stop us, you'll go in too. See? *And* he's lucky to get off so light; there's some of us 'ud wring his neck if we had our way."

That was the spirit that the communists met when they tried to kick a country that was almost down.

CHAPTER VI

The man I fought outside Buckingham Palace—The Royal Box at Covent Garden invaded—The man with the skull and crossbones, and what I did with him.

THIS chapter, for a change, does not actually deal with anarchists. I have inserted it here because, in a chronological record of my career, it takes this place, the events told in it occurring in those gay years just before the War when all England seemed to be dancing to the lazy tunes of Strauss waltzes, in a dream of content and peace. But even then everything was not perfectly peaceful, for at least two events in which I was implicated took place which would have caused a very considerable stir had they ever got into the newspapers.

The first began when one of the gardeners at Buckingham Palace picked up, just inside the high wall which bounds the Palace gardens from Grosvenor Place, a tiny note addressed in a tall, spiky hand to one of our Royal Princesses. The note, which was promptly handed to me since it had obviously not arrived from a legitimate source, was a passionate one, declaring the writer's deathless love for the lady to whom it was addressed, and begging her graciously to receive the tokens of the writer's affection which he would shortly contrive to send to her.

That put me on my mettle. The unknown might have penetrated our guard once, but he should not do so again. I examined the paper under a microscope, but merely found that it was of fine texture, foreign—probably Italian—manufacture, unwatermarked, and that the writing, which

was unsigned, was probably the work of a cultured man of middle age and foreign nationality, the latter point of course being deduced from the Continental formation of the letters. I watched the Palace myself, instructed the servants what to do if anything further was found, and gave certain warnings to various police officers. And then the next thing that happened was that a short and beautiful love-poem was found in another part of the grounds, obviously having been thrown over the wall as before, and addressed to the same lady.

I began to realize my difficulties. The notes might have been thrown from a passing omnibus, or tossed over at night by a passer-by, or have come from any member of the crowd that passed the walls every hour of the day. I tightened up the watch, but two more messages and another poem were handed to me during the next three weeks, and I began to lose sleep over the matter. I skulked around the walls eighteen hours out of the twenty-four, I had every yard patrolled, I passed and repassed in disguise, but all to no avail. What was worse, the messages were now followed by a magnificent diamond ring, and then, two days after, by an exquisite and valuable pearl and ruby brooch, each accompanied by a note which told of sincerity and worship in every line. I must have been a rather short-tempered man in those days!

Each missive arrived in a different place, and it seemed that, unless our quarry had a cloak of invisibility or dropped his messages from a balloon, he could not escape us much longer. Nor did he. I was lurking in the stable yard of the Palace one afternoon when I heard footsteps approaching. Looking out of my hiding-place, I saw a tall, distinguished-looking man coming rapidly towards me. He passed me, took something from his pocket, and, without any hesitation, flung it over the wall into the gardens inside.

I could not resist a triumphant smile as I stepped out and faced him, but my smile soon faded. For the man must have known something about boxing—he let out at me the finest straight left I have ever seen outside the Albert Hall.

I managed to dodge, and as his fist sped past my ear, I closed with him. He was extraordinarily powerful, but I had had the regulation police training in ju-jitsu, and after a short, fierce struggle, he realized that resistance was useless. I took my captive to the nearest police station, only glad that the average criminal did not possess his remarkable abilities.

He proved to be a foreigner of rank and breeding, and he bore me no malice for having done my duty. But it was duly pointed out to him that, although this country had no ill-feeling against him, he could not be permitted to offer unsought attentions to any British lady, much less a Royal one; and in the end he was given into the charge of his friends and left England, giving his word of honour never to return.

My last interesting pre-war memory is of the man who tried to invade the Royal Box at the Covent Garden Opera House. That was in 1913, I remember; I had spent the morning at a garden party which the Premier was giving, for, as His Majesty was present, I had to attend also as a precaution against any ill-judged anarchist activities. I was in morning dress, and after the King had left, I made my way home to change. As I entered, my telephone bell rang imperatively.

"Is that Mr. Fitch?" asked an excited voice. "You must come immediately to the Opera House."

The voice was scared as well as excited, and I stayed to ask no questions. In morning dress, just as I was, I raced downstairs and jumped into the first taxi I could see, and

the driver made for Covent Garden at a pace I have never since equalled, at any rate in a taxi. When I got there, I found the management in a state approaching nervous collapse!

"Some madman's got in here, Mr. Fitch!" babbled the manager, almost dragging me up the stairs. "He's got a black skull and crossbones worked on his shirt, and he's stalking up and down by the Royal Box. I'm horribly afraid. Look! there he is!"

"His Majesty doesn't know he's there," he whispered. "Don't make a disturbance in here if you can help it. Try to get him outside somehow. We don't want a fight outside the Royal Box—the Queen and some of the Royal Family are in there, and they'd be alarmed. Besides, you know what the people would do if they thought there was anything threatening the King."

So, while the fiddles scraped and the choruses echoed, and the performers worked their hardest to earn the Royal applause, I stood in the corridor, within easy distance, trying to humour my madman to come outside with me. He was a tall, bony-looking fellow with light, wild eyes, and his dress coat was open to show a big skull and cross-bones design realistically worked on his dress shirt. I argued and wheedled, and humoured him as much as I could; he was intent on entering the Royal Box, and two or three times started towards it, but drew back when I told him that there were attendants inside, and that they would inevitably stop him before he could speak with His Majesty.

After some minutes of talking, during which I kept every muscle tense for a spring in case my man went too near the door behind which the Royal Family sat unconscious of his presence, I hit on a brilliant argument. I told the madman that his only chance of seeing the King

face to face was to come out into the street and wait till His Majesty crossed to his car, when his attendants would be behind him. Of course, the story of the attendants in the box was a mere myth; but my ruse served. The man with the skull and crossbones turned it over in his mind, looked searchingly at me, and then came with me down the stairs.

Attendants dropped back before us at a sign from me, though their hands were itching to get to grips with the tall fellow who accompanied me. I got him quite quietly out into the street, and then I put my hand on his shoulder and told him to consider himself under arrest. I began an explanation, but my quarry spun suddenly round, got me by the arm, and nearly broke it at his first wrench. I let him have a straight left and managed to free myself, and then flung my arms round him. I have never tackled so strong a man. We swayed to and fro, the theatre attendants dodging round us, unable to help because we writhed and struggled so violently. The issue was in doubt for a second when he caught my twisted arm again, but then I managed to put him down with a Japanese trick, and a policeman who had been trying to help got him by one arm while I took the other.

As I had suspected when I got my first glimpse of him, the man was mad. Whether there was any truth in his wild tales about his anarchist instigators, I cannot say; I believe he was just crazed. Anyway, he was subsequently certified to be insane, and placed in an asylum.

One other adventure I had when I was attending the King in 1913, ended much more quietly. His Majesty was returning from opening Parliament, when, just before his coach reached Buckingham Palace, an old man ran suddenly out of the crowd and drew back his hand as if to throw something at the coach. I was beside him and

had gripped his arm before he could do so, however; and I discovered that the thing he held in his hand was merely some form of petition. I would have arrested the man, an old respectable-looking Jew, but His Majesty stopped his coach and asked what was the matter.

"In most Continental countries," he said to me after the Royal coach had passed on, "I should have been clubbed nearly to death for that, and my petition torn to pieces. I was wrong to stop the coach like that; but no wonder you love your King!"

From my own years of contact with His Majesty, I can very fully endorse that opinion. I have met officially a good many of the Royal visitors to this country, I have shown them the sights of London, travelling by 'bus and tube incognito and unrecognized, and I have met them occasionally when I have been abroad guarding our own Royalties in foreign visits. Nearly all of these personages were exceedingly nice to me; some of them pressed rewards and decorations on me, as when the Kaiser presented me with the Order of the Red Eagle for attending him when he was over here before the War. But not one of them has that curious, attractive charm which His Majesty can so wonderfully exercise, which makes any man who comes into contact with him loyally devoted to him for life, and which is his own surest safeguard in the hearts of his people against all those who wish him ill. Scotland Yard can do much to keep actual foreign agitators and murderers from his person, but he himself has succeeded in setting about the throne the impenetrable guard of the united British people's love, respect and loyalty.

CHAPTER VII

The outbreak of war—Communists shepherded into prison camps if troublesome—The stormy-petrels fly north-east—How Russia was destroyed—The part strikes played at home—Germany follows Russia.

THE outbreak of war which broke like a thunderclap after the sultry world-oppression of July 1914, meant for me a very considerable change over in duties. Elsewhere in this book I deal more fully with the new tasks which I was given in 1914, and tell the story of my anti-spy work during the war years. That work kept me so busy that I should have had but little time to devote to the repression of anarchist activities; but fortunately a number of causes conspired together to lighten that side of the task.

In the first place, immediately war was declared, the police force was given a very free hand to rid the country of troublesome guests. We cleared the decks for action to some effect, for nearly a hundred agitators of various grades and degrees of danger were swept into the net within a week of the declaration of war; and they were then confined in prison camps or exported as undesirables. Since the Yard knew the whereabouts of practically every dangerous anarchist in the country, and had only been prevented from acting before by lack of actual violence, that comprehensive round-up did a lot to relieve anxiety in high places. Many a harassed police official now wishes from the bottom of his heart that a similar coup might be worked to-morrow!

Another big factor which relieved England of strain during the war years from the communist agitator source was that the British people, for the first time in their history, went solidly against any outside interference. I have already told one story of the treatment of an anarchist by a North London crowd; here is an incident I myself witnessed near Victoria, in September 1914. In a busy back-street, a man had mounted himself on a soap-box and begun talking about the War, and the way that lives were being wasted in France. The gathering crowd listened for some time in silence. Then a khaki-clad figure pushed his way near to the orator.

I have heard quite a few men let off steam, but I take off my hat to that sergeant. He must have spent five minutes describing the agitator and those who sent him. The crowd tittered at first, then it laughed, and finally it roared. After the first minute, during which the soap-box gentleman tried to shout the sergeant down (with notable lack of success), he thought it time to pack up, and tried to get off his box. But the sergeant, a big, powerful fellow, got hold of him by the arm and held him still until his vocabulary was exhausted. Then he called to the crowd to open a passage and sped his man down it with a magnificent kick. That kick typified the spirit of all England in those days towards revolutionary agents.

During the first two years of the War, a significant movement was noticeable among the few anarchists left free in England. They urgently wanted to return to Russia. Since Russia was an allied country, and since most of the foreigners wanting to go there had come from there originally, we had no choice but to let them go. But the exodus looked menacing; the crows were gathering above the dying bear, and had we had any shadow of authority, we should have kept them here.

One of the first to go was Lev Trotsky, usually incorrectly known nowadays as Leon Trotsky. We had him under observation, of course, knowing that his return to Russia would do that agonized country no good, and in 1917 he was arrested by the Special Department while trying to leave Halifax for Petrograd. Unfortunately there was no legitimate excuse to detain him long, and so one of the master minds of anarchism hurried north-eastwards to help shape the world's history.

Lenin, at that time, was in Switzerland, exiled by the Tsarist authorities but still in constant communication with the bolshevist agents in Russia. He applied to us for leave to come here and return to Russia from one of our ports. We refused him, knowing that his return would mark the beginning of the end of our ally. It says much for the reputation this remarkable man had gained that when he sent the same request to Germany, it was received there with the strongest official approval, although he had previously been forbidden to enter the country. Now, however, at the Kaiser's personal order, a special sealed car was placed at his disposal bearing the German Headquarters Staff identification mark, which absolutely precluded any examination or delay by German police officials. Lenin and his anarchist staff sped through Germany and Russia to Petrograd, and there he became the mainspring of what he had always sworn should be the beginning of the end of modern civilization as we know it.

There were, particularly towards the end of the War, a number of abortive efforts to stir up strikes and disloyalty among British workmen at home. Lenin, now directing revolutionary operations all over the world from a powerful position in Russia, struck as quickly and as hard as he could at the factories which turned out the munitions which were our very sinews of war. He was ready to use

any deluded pacifists in this country, and did so to some effect. By circulating through his agents here seductively-worded pamphlets saying that the War was being waged for capitalist profit, he urged a stoppage of vital services of all sorts.

At the Socialist Hall, Wandsworth, in August 1917, a meeting of the Shop Stewards' Committee took place to consider a great engineers' strike which had then been in operation for a fortnight. This strike was holding up munitions to a serious extent, and in consequences of it there were whispers of resignations in quarters where the country could not then afford to accept them.

With twenty constables I raided the meeting, and the job was done so quietly that no one in the street outside knew that we had entered the building. That was necessary, for there were a few discontented men by the doors who might have started a fight; and the authorities particularly did not want street squabbles just then. I remember the chairman's astonished face and open mouth as I stepped up to him and asked him for the addresses of certain representatives who were not present.

In the end, seven men were arrested, and they duly appeared at Bow Street. It was a striking comment on these men that all but one of them were of military age, though in that hour of national need they were still to be found at home. Finally, they were released, after having signed an agreement never again to make strikes or impede munition work, and to call back the engineers to their labours again on condition that terms should be fixed for them by an Executive Committee of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers and the Minister of Munitions. That strike consequently was soon forgotten; had certain agitators had their way, it might have caused the gravest consequences in France, where, by the end of the

fortnight, artillery supplies were already dangerously shortened.

When the problem of conscription came seriously under consideration, that also was used by anarchist agents in the hope that it might prove a lever with which Britain could be revolutionized. Numbers of societies were founded with the avowed object of resisting conscription; some few of them were honest, but the majority were in receipt of anarchist gold and were working for anarchist ends. Unfortunately enough, we had to raid the innocent with the guilty, as in those days risks could not be afforded, and it was impossible to tell without actual search what character these societies bore.

In the last months of 1917 I raided five such offices, and in two cases continued my examinations at the homes of officials connected with the organizations. I found a great many leaflets of more or less seditious types, and of course confiscated them, and I talked with all sorts of men and women, some of them merely fanatical, and others definitely untrustworthy. My instructions in those days were to avoid trouble as much as possible, and to try by giving serious verbal warnings to head off weak and obstinate persons from those who would have deluded them. And in most cases I was able, by telling them in confidence something of what I knew of the horrible, self-seeking machine at whose instigation they were working, and giving them a little inside information about the anarchist murderers I had met, to send them away disgustedly certain that they had been duped, and anxious to avoid anything similar in future.

An interesting example of the sort of man who did not aid his country in the War was a delegate of a Seamen's Union whom I arrested in 1917 on the ground of illegally passing men of military age out of the country. He was

accused of taking considerable sums of money from young men who wished to avoid military service, and of giving them in exchange seamen's certificates enabling them to serve on merchant steamers, and thus escape actual fighting. That spirit, my experience goes to show, pervades all anarchist, bolshevist and most socialist bodies—they are very ready indeed to help the under-dog, but the unfortunate under-dog has got to pay a price, in money, service or blind promises, which all the assistance in the world would not be worth. I am no politician, but personally, after what I have seen, I would be sorry indeed to see any young man of my acquaintance connecting himself with even the mildest form of anarchism. It usually leads to trouble, and I have too often known it lead to murder or suicide.

CHAPTER VIII

I arrest Morel—An ex-M.P. arrested for distributing harmful pamphlets
—Communist attempts to sow sedition at the Front, and what the
soldiers did!—Mr. Ramsay MacDonald at the Front.

ONE of the most interesting men I had to arrest during the War was Mr. E. D. Morel, the famous journalist. His name is apt to be forgotten now, but in pre-war days he ranked with Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe as one of the most notable opponents of enslaved native labour. His books, "King Leopold's Rule in Africa," and "Red Rubber," were burning subjects of controversy in those days, and curiously enough he had first come into prominence in connection with a statement on Congo atrocities from Sir Roger Casement. It will be remembered that the latter was hanged during the War for his attempt to give the Germans a foothold in Ireland; Morel, though not actually a pro-German, was a pacifist, and began getting into trouble very soon after the outbreak of war.

At first he was too cautious to embroil himself, though he used his enormous reputation to deplore our entry into the struggle and to plead the gospel of peace at any price. He appeared on the committees of various pacifist organizations, but always kept just within the letter of the law, though his propaganda was a continual nuisance to those who carried on the onerous task of working for British victory. In course of time, he became leader of the Union of Democratic Control, a pacifist society allied to the No-Conscription League. It will be remembered that, at

the time conscription was enforced, losses of merchantmen at sea and heavy reverses on almost all fronts had reduced our morale to a gravely despondent pitch, and Morel began at this time to step over the borderline of legal practices. One afternoon, I received a telephone call instructing me to go at once to see the late Sir Francis Lloyd, then Competent Military Authority of London, and when I arrived he showed me a leaflet supposed to have originated from Morel's office, and told me to raid the place. The leaflet was so definitely pacifist as to be almost anti-British in tone, and would certainly have done us serious harm abroad.

A number of similar leaflets were found at Morel's offices, and others in proof and actually printed at his house at King's Langley, which I raided too. At the trial, Morel, whose real name was E. Morel de Ville, was charged under the Defence of the Realm Acts with having incited a Miss Ethel Sidgwick to smuggle a quantity of the pamphlets over to Switzerland, whence they would have been conveyed to Germany, with disastrous effect in the way of heartening the enemy. Morel was lucky to get off lightly with only six months in the second division; and he was allowed to go to prison in a taxi because of his services to humanity in connection with the Congo conditions.

During the four years of war, various attempts were made to cause disaffection among troops at the Front. These efforts mostly originated in communist groups in Switzerland, which at that time harboured a number of anarchists of the Lenin variety. Leaflets privately printed there were smuggled in quantities into France, and offered to soldiers passing to and fro on leave. The French police gave short shrift to the agents they caught distributing such matter, but it seems that the Tommies were even less gentle.

It happened at the Base Camp at Le Havre that a certain

officer, beloved but dreaded by his men for his peppery temper, came across a leaflet inciting "all British soldiers who respect their fellow-workers at home and abroad and are ready to strike a blow against tyranny" to turn their rifles on their officers. The leaflet went on to suggest that this might be safely done during attacks, in the confusion of wire-cutting. The officer who found it said nothing, but pinned it up among the regimental notices.

Two mornings later, he went to add something to the board and found, lashed to the pole that supported it, the drooping figure of a man. Cord passed round his legs and shoulders in such a way that he could not move, and he was gagged with a dirty roll of cloth. The sentries denied all knowledge of how he had come there; but when he was cut down, a number of the offensive leaflets were still in one of his inner pockets. The honour of the regiment was salved. The leaflet was almost identical in wording to one which, in 1910, I had myself seen in an anarchist den I raided near Hornsey.

A somewhat similar pamphlet, though not so openly seditious, brought an ex-M.P. within the reach of the long arm of the law. There was in March 1918 a huge Labour conference at Westminster Hall, attended by a number of Labour leaders who have since become world-famous. In the course of my duties, I went along to this meeting and had a look round to see that all was as it should be. And the first thing I saw was a man, standing by the entrance to the building, furtively handing out papers to people who passed in and out. I watched him for a minute or two in the rain to make sure that I was right, and then, passing near and giving him a meaning look, quietly held out my hand. The man looked rapidly round to make sure that no police official could see him and then pressed something into my palm. I went round the corner of the building and

had a look at it. It was full to the brim with the most disloyal statements, suggestions and advice, and I promptly went back and put my hand on the distributor's shoulder. He was surprised!

The pamphlet I had received had no printer's name or address, which in itself was a breach of the law. But it did not take me long to find out from my prisoner the source from which he obtained his stock-in-trade (he himself, poor old fellow, was a vagrant who would have distributed anything for a few shillings), and after further enquiries I traced their origin back to the last man in the world I would have suspected, the late Mr. Arnold Lupton, formerly M.P. for Sleaford.

When the case came up for trial, Sir Archibald Bodkin, for the Crown, referred to "the wicked and mischievous matters this leaflet contains," and he did not overstate his case. Raiding the prisoner's offices, I discovered proof that he had been sending the leaflets to notable Conscientious Objectors, German prisoners and soldiers home on leave. Here again the man could do but little harm at home because of the loyalty of the people, but such matter, coming from an ex-Member of the British Parliament, being published in Germany or in any neutral country, as it might well have been had we not stopped it in time, would then have done this country incalculable harm. Once again the author was awarded only six months' imprisonment.

A good deal has been written since the War of the activities of those famous members of the Labour Party in Great Britain who organized pacifist demonstrations during the War. Certain politicians since famous as representatives of our Government chose the war years as a time suitable for all sorts of speeches and actions in which they expressed their opinions that war should always be avoided at any

price, and that Britain was morally in the wrong in wasting the lives of her soldiers over a mere "scrap of paper" which pledged our country's honour in the eyes of the world. Of course, I personally consider those politicians to have been following quite mistaken ideals; I myself hold views contrary to theirs in that and many other particulars. But let me say now that the official Labour Party and the real politicians of the pre-War Labour Movement had nothing whatever to do at any time with anarchist or disloyal efforts such as I have described. Mr. Ramsay MacDonald and his followers may have been an embarrassment to us during the war years, but they were always scrupulously honest in wishing Britain's welfare, and never for a moment did they tamper with bolshevism or anarchism. They would have been as indignant as the Chief of Police himself at any effort to cause national revolution or military mutiny.

One famous Labour leader, indeed, served for a short time as a stretcher-bearer at the Front, and risked his life in heavily shelled areas time and again bringing in wounded men. It was always his argument that, though he was a pacifist, yet he would do anything common humanity permitted to ease the sufferings of our casualties; and from my own experiences of the Lenin type of agitator, I do not believe that one in a thousand of them would risk his own skin for his principles in that way. On one occasion, towards the end of the War, Mr. MacDonald was making a political visit to France, and was moving along a communication trench behind the lines when a shrapnel shell exploded a little ahead of his party. The General who was escorting him has often since told the story of that moment. "I looked round," says the General, "to see whether Mr. MacDonald, as a confirmed peacemaker, would blink at the explosion, which was pretty near us. But, bless you, I believe he was cooler than I was myself; and then I

learned that it was not the first time he had been under fire."

To return to the anarchists. It was a little surprising for me, during the last year of the War, to find the differences that the Russian Revolution had made in my work. Lenin, once a fleeing exile seeking sanctuary in England and attending, as I have told, secret anarchist conferences here, had become a ruler more absolute than the Tsar he superseded; Trotsky was now a general; and over here men who had formerly been furtive anarchists living in slum streets with the official eye never very far removed from their neighbourhood had suddenly been appointed ambassadors, consuls, plenipotentiaries, and welcomed as official and respected visitors.

I cannot, unfortunately, give names, for these people have in many cases become famous since as representatives of the new Russia of the hammer and sickle. But one man, now known by name even to the quietest of Britain's inhabitants, featured in 1918 in a rather amusing incident which illustrates the vagaries of fortune. I had been active for some days on a search for a spy whose letters, stopped by our censor and passed to me for examination, bore no name or address, and on the day in question I had decided to comb certain waterside haunts in London where the man had evidently been a few days earlier.

Passing a block of shipping offices I was run into and almost knocked down by a man who had come hurriedly out of the door without looking where he was going. The man, a tall figure in a fur-collared coat, gave one look at me, muttered something and ran several steps away before he could manage, with an absurd dignity, to pull himself into a walk. It was his walk that betrayed him—otherwise I should hardly have recognized the well-fed, well-dressed figure. But that slightly-limping strut brought back

vividly to my mind a man I had once cross-questioned in an East London room. At that time he was a prominent member of the Lettish Club to which the Gardstein murder gang belonged; and at the end of my questioning, he was so uncomfortable (though actually he was innocent of all connection with that crime) that the memory survived after eight years, and my unexpected presence gave him such a shock as sent him, officially licensed representative of his country as he was, scampering away down Wapping High Street!

CHAPTER IX

I arrest the Bolshevik Ambassador during the Second Russian Revolution—Has the leopard really changed his spots?—The Police Strike in 1918, and its friendly settlement—General Macready becomes Police Chief—Soldiers at the Yard; their difficulties and successes.

ON September 6th, 1918, I received a dramatic message from a high official at the Yard. The effects of that message made history, since, for the first time in the record of a civilized country, a foreign ambassador within its capital was arrested. My orders were to arrest M. Litvinoff and two of his assistants, M. Herman Wintin and M. Vladimir Oshminski, because they "had, were about to, or were committing a suspicious act." My rush by taxi to Golders Green and the subsequent warning which, as in duty bound, I offered, that anything said might be used in evidence against my prisoners, seemed to me quite like old times, when the prototypes of these indignant Russians now before me had, in their former anarchist state, been my natural enemies!

It was not actually made public at the time, but the real reason for arresting these three officials was not solely that their own acts were suspicious. It was also that we hoped at that time that their detention would save the lives of British citizens then in revolutionary Russia. Word had just been received by radio from Moscow that the British Consulate at Petrograd had been sacked, and that all communication with it had ceased. Foul play was feared even then; two days later it was discovered that Captain Crombie, D.S.O., a British Naval Officer at the

Consulate, had been shot in half a dozen places and murdered when trying to guard official papers belonging to the British Government, and that several other British people in Petrograd had been seized, brutally ill-treated, beaten with sticks and fists, and finally flung into a filthy gaol whose internal conditions were absolutely indescribable.

Immediately this news was confirmed, our Government sent a strong telegram to the Bolshevik authorities, reporting that arrests of their officials had been made in London, requiring full reparation for the harm to British life and property already done in Russia, and insisting on the immediate release of all British prisoners wrongfully confined and their safe conduct over the Finnish border. There followed days of suspense, but our official telegram remained unanswered, and its conditions were sneeringly ignored. Then came an urgent message from our Embassy at Moscow, saying that reliable information had been received there that the Embassy was to be attacked, and that the Russian authorities would wink at such an outrage. The Embassy was sacked, valuable papers destroyed and our official representatives in Moscow made to flee for their very lives. The true story of that attack has never yet been given in detail; it is one to make all true Englishmen blush with shame! And its only sequel was that, six days after his dramatic arrest M. Litvinoff was released, though we were told to keep him "under police supervision." Government bluff had been treated with contempt by Bolshevik authorities, and its weakness was publicly acknowledged by that release while our Moscow Embassy rooms were still a mass of smashed furniture and burnt official papers.

I have no wish to enter into a political discussion on the merits or demerits of British Governmental intercourse with Soviet Russia, for in any case one must realize that

international trading is a necessity, and this cannot adequately be dealt with if official diplomatic recognition is forbidden. But solely as regards police work, the ascent to high places of those who were for so many years the hunted quarry of most of the police authorities of Europe has produced a big crop of difficulties for the unfortunate detective of to-day. With my own ears, I have heard Lenin declaim against Great Britain and threaten her downfall by revolution, and urge the advent of that revolution (in which King and Government were to be swept away, as in Russia) as Britain's only salvation. Lenin's creed vitalized most of the rulers of Russia to-day. Meanwhile, we give diplomatic immunity to Soviet officials in this country, making it possible for them if they so choose to forward Lenin's doctrines and hatch Lenin's plots in our very midst.

Understand, I do not make any suggestion that this is done. Doubtless, as they come to realize that worlds are not successfully and happily ruled by the voice of destructive anarchism, the old fire-eaters and bomb-throwers will modify their views. The irresistible pressure of the machine of world politics will, in time, shape them, if not into idealists, at least to something which understands the limits of armed revolt and secret murder as means to a political end. But I have had so much to do with the anarchists who have since shaped the new Russia that I find it very hard to believe that such desperate extremists could ever be very ready to welcome a change of heart; can the leopard really change his spots, or the lion lie down in mutual comfort with the lamb? The Arcos Raid, of which I shall have more to say in a later chapter, gave many people serious doubts of it.

I have now to tell of a great strike of 1918 which was, for once, not caused by anarchist agitators, but which gave

rise to a good many false hopes in the minds of some of them. At the beginning of September, there was a police strike dramatic in its sudden completeness, for a very large number of policemen of all grades "stopped work." Thousands of Special Constables were immediately called out to carry on the vital duties of traffic regulation, night patrolling and the everyday tasks for the preservation of law and order. The "Specials" (all of them, of course, old or disabled men) responded gallantly to the call; but I trust they will forgive an "old soldier" for saying that they were not always very sure with their traffic, as I happen to remember. In my own work, for the three days the strike lasted, I found it quicker to travel on foot, generally speaking, than by taxi.

The cause of the strike was a question of police pay, which was admittedly not very high at that time, for due allowances had never been made for the tremendous rise in prices which, by the autumn of 1918, was causing even good pre-war incomes to seem seriously shrunken. Police Constable Theil had been dismissed for raising a question about wage increases, and one of the demands of the strikers was that he should be reinstated.

On the third morning after the outbreak, the Prime Minister offered to deal with the problem in person. Meanwhile, London and other big towns were witnessing extraordinary scenes. Several thousand ex-policemen, having nothing else to do, had been spending the previous days talking more or less friendlily to the "Specials" who had superseded them. In one or two places there was a certain amount of good-natured booing when the newcomers found the traffic a bit too much for them. Also, as was natural enough, there was a good deal of persuasion offered to them to join the strike, but the amateurs stuck manfully to their job.

On the corner of Westminster Bridge and Whitehall, where traffic is thick at the best of times, a small and elderly "Special" got into difficulties, on the last morning of the strike, and a traffic block of really magnificent proportions ensued. Coming out of the House of Commons I found vehicles of all sorts forming quivering black tentacles in all directions from the stricken "point," much like the tentacles of an octopus. But the things one or two of the girl drivers were saying would have made most octopi blush!

I went along to see if I could be of assistance. At the cross-roads I found the "Special" in the middle of a knot of burly men in mufti. "It's no good you tryin' it no more," said one of the latter as I came up. "You ain't half made a pretty little job of this! Shows what comes o' usin' you blinkin' amachoors! You leave it to us, mate; we'll put it right for yer. Now you stand on the pavement there and think about Kayser Bill, an' leave it to us." Ten minutes later, the strikers, for that is what they were, had cleared the congestion perfectly and handed over official control again to "the blinkin' amachoor."

As a direct result of the Prime Minister's intervention, reasonable terms were offered to the strikers that afternoon. Thirteen shillings a week increase was allowed on pensions, various increases were made on wages and on allowances for children, a war bonus of thirteen shillings a week was offered, and Police Constable Thiel was reinstated with no official record of his dismissal. Passing through Charing Cross that evening, I heard tremendous mass cheering from a number of stikers gathered there, and realized that next morning would see the familiar blue uniforms again about the streets.

That night the Commissioner of Police sent in his resignation, which was accepted with the sweetening

addition of an offer of a baronetcy. The new Commissioner, Lieutenant-General Sir C. F. Neville Macready, was the first of a line of distinguished military men who have since been in control at the Yard, and his appointment was received in the Force with widespread approval.

Since then a lot of criticism has been levelled at the system which rules that soldiers shall control our police forces. It has been argued that a man whose life has been spent studying military tactics, the respective merits of trench or cavalry warfare, the problems of using modern artillery and transporting bodies of attacking and defending troops, cannot be the best choice for a position whose holder must control crime prevention, arrange and operate detective organizations and co-ordinate the thousand activities of modern police work. It has even been openly hinted in the Press and elsewhere that certain recent resignations at the Yard have been caused by the resentment of old detective officers in being taught their job by soldiers.

I am in touch pretty nearly as much nowadays with my old team-mates in the Criminal Investigation Department as I was when I was still on the active list, and I can definitely say that such rumours are absolutely without foundation. No detective would allow personal feelings to come before public duty; and in point of fact the Commissioner does not interfere with detective work, which is controlled by its own official heads at the Yard. The job of a Commissioner is just to organize and co-ordinate the police and detective machine as a whole; he does not interfere with the duties of each or any part of it.

There is, however, a definite "grouse" among some of the leading detectives of to-day, and the cause is that such a number of new regulations have been issued in the last four or five years, due to pressure from humanitarian

Members of Parliament (who have never seen a criminal in their lives and believe the breed to be a species of harried and bullied martyr), that it is really extremely difficult nowadays to make a case even against the most brutal murderer. An example of the regulations which cause the trouble is one which says that if a police officer should apprehend a suspected person near the scene of a murder and within a few hours of the commission of the crime, and if his quarry has marks of blood on his hands or clothing the officer may on no account question him as to how they came there until he has had opportunity to obtain legal advice!

Think of it! Your nearest relative or friend may be murdered to-morrow, and that rule would quite possibly permit the murderer to get off scot free! For of course, once legal advice is taken, no admissions are ever obtained! There have been a number of murders in the last year for which no one has been arrested merely because regulations now make a police case against a suspected person absolutely unsure of a successful termination, no matter how obvious the guilt may be. To ask detectives to work under such rules is like asking an athlete to run hobbled! But the fault does not lie with the military Police Commissioners.

CHAPTER X

After the War—Anarchists agents among the “demobbed” meet with little sympathy—We deport a few of them—Degradation of Trebitsch Lincoln, Jew, Presbyterian Minister, Anglican Priest, M.P. and double traitor.

WHEN the Armistice was signed at last, I made another big change-over in the nature of my work. After four strenuous years of spy-catching, I turned again to the anti-anarchist activities of my Department. Just before the War broke out, I had been doing a good deal of work in personal contact with various members of our Royal Family, and had there been no hostilities I might perhaps have ended my active career as personal police guard to one of its members. But in 1918, with only a few more years before my retirement became due, it did not seem advisable to attempt to take up that side of my duties in exclusion to other ones, particularly as I could not have served for many years before another man would necessarily have superseded me. So I turned back to my old friends, the bomb and knife band!

Truth to tell, we expected a good deal of trouble with them between 1918 and 1920. Thousands of men were demobilizing from the Army, jobs were scarce, prices were high, promises almost hysterically given in war years could not always be made good in the cold light of reason. In fact, conditions were then more favourable than for half a century previously for agitators to find likely material to work upon among the ranks of the shell-shocked, the discontented and the newly poor. And anarchist agents,

never long at rest, began to flock to England in all kinds of disguises, to try to stir up that longed-for revolution in which the working-man should suffer the losses and the instigators get the pickings.

Once more it was proved that the War, ghastly calamity to humanity as it was, had yet knitted together the loyal fibre of our race and so stirred its former too-satisfied spirit, that where aliens with specious plans for our national downfall had formerly been listened to in apathy or sympathy, now they received the cold shoulder or the ex-Army boot! In police court cases during those two years, it happened time and again that an agitator sought redress from the very law he himself flouted, because his efforts to suborn the loyalty of out-of-works had ended in painful assault and battery upon his person! And most of those cases were dismissed with a grim warning from the bench not to invite trouble in future.

On the whole, these anarchist agents had a thankless task. Although, now, they could operate with considerably more outside assistance (for, whatever the Soviet Government said or did officially, it certainly permitted anarchist clubs and societies to use Russia as a jumping-off place for attempts to revolutionize Britain), yet they found our police watch as attentive as ever here, and received a much less enthusiastic welcome from their intended dupes. Some of them, however, went about their tasks with quite a fanatical fervour, and consequently had to be deported as, one after another, they broke our country's laws.

In February 1919, a big, bearded, sallow-faced Russian named Myer Hyman was recommended for deportation and moved out of the country. His offence technically was in failing to register himself as an alien. I wonder how many times my readers have noticed that innocuous phrase in their newspapers when the real reason behind

the arrest was not merely failure to register but also desperate attempts to cause armed outbreaks in Britain. Mr. Hyman's real reason for leaving was that, in organizing a London conference of ex-criminals, known anarchist agents and socialist extremists in London, he made a silly mistake. I went along to his lodgings one evening, sent up a note indicating that I was a Swedish agitator of some repute known to him by name but not by sight, and finally went in and discussed with him his plans for sowing disaffection among the lower ranks in the Army. Having obtained enough information, I finally arrested him.

The same day, I arrested a compatriot of his, one Max Segal, who was to have attended the conference, and also Jules Edvard Soermus, a Finnish violinist. Segal had, it transpired from Mr. Hyman's candid remarks to me, come over as official representative of a powerful revolutionary society in Moscow, and he had brought with him the sum of £4,000 in gold and bonds. This money was to be used for necessary expenses in England, such as the setting up of private printing presses for producing anarchist literature, the purchase if possible of arms and ammunition, and the payment of agents to spread mutinous and revolutionary arguments throughout Great Britain. A good proportion of it subsequently found its way into the British Treasury coffers. Soermus, outwardly a respectable member of a cinema orchestra, carried in the case of his spare violin papers which, as Hyman told me with a throaty chuckle, the English bluebottles (police) would give their eyes to see. I need hardly say that, when I raided Mr. Soermus, it was unnecessary to give anything nearly as valuable, though the papers were admittedly of enormous help to us, not so much then as a month or two later, when certain other deportations took place. The upshot of it all was that Hyman, Segal and Soermus were tried together, and

finally deported together, Hyman apparently rather depressed by his friends' black looks in his direction. In July the same year, Frances Ida Soermus (nee Hewitt), born at Barnstaple on October 4th, 1896, and married to Soermus when she was twenty-one years of age, left England to join her husband abroad, because, he said, he had finally decided that it was too dangerous to return. The young woman stepping on board the steamer had not the slightest suspicion that she was watched; but Scotland Yard never gives much loose rein to those who trouble it, and we had known from the beginning that she only stayed here in order to help her husband back to Britain should occasion arise.

It was round about this time that a small notice appeared in the *London Gazette* which wrote FINIS to the activities in this country of that amazing man, Ignatius Timothy Trebitsch Lincoln. The notice itself merely announced briefly that a Certificate of Naturalization, granted on May 5th, 1909, was revoked for disloyalty to His Majesty. To me, it was the end of a very long story, almost incredible in its details; for I had professionally watched over Lincoln's dramatic career for eight years, and had always expected some such end to it.

A Jew, born in Hungary, he featured very early in life in anarchist troubles there. He was then believed to have been influenced by older men while himself still impressionable and adolescent, but his after life showed that curious natural ferocity against all authority and system which has been the hall-mark of other notable Jews such as Lenin and Trotsky. Like them he proved ready to sacrifice anything, even his religion and pride of race, if only he could harm England, which was then considered the chief bulwark against all forms of anarchist activity.

After travelling for a year or two he came to England,

already with somewhat of a reputation for incendiary activities, and here he became first a Presbyterian minister and then a Church of England clergyman. But always, at the back of his mind, he had the idea of harming England. Soon afterwards, he was elected M.P. for Darlington, coming in with a small majority over Mr. Pike Pease, and so he found himself at Westminster with increased powers to hurt the country that sheltered him. What he did not know was that, all the time, he was being patiently watched, and that his revolutionary efforts were known to the police from the first moment he set foot in this country. There are to-day other men like him who think themselves very clever and unsuspected, and who in the fullness of time will, like Lincoln, discover their mistake.

At the outbreak of war this man went to the Admiralty with a wild-cat scheme for the destruction of the German High Seas Fleet. At a little room at the Admiralty building in Whitehall he brazenly confessed that he had formerly been a spy of Germany, but that he had never sent them any useful information and that he only wanted their money. At the same time, he said, the German authorities still trusted him, and he proposed that he should get in touch with them, telling them that a weak portion of the British Fleet would be at a certain station at a certain time, and advise them to send a strong squadron to destroy it. Mr. Lincoln coolly suggested that we should then send our whole battle fleet to the spot and exterminate the enemy squadron.

Imagine the scene. The astute, dark-faced Hungarian Jew advancing point after point of his wily arguments in the sunny, dusty room at the Admiralty, and watching the blue-eyed rugged face of the one man in all England who would have had the daring to execute such a scheme had it been desirable or possible—fierce, heavy-browed old

John Fisher. There was a pause, during which Fisher left the room. In that pause, he made certain enquiries about the man who had come to him, and was told that he was unreliable, disloyal and probably working a double game in the enemy's interests. Two minutes later, old John had, in his own expressive phraseology, told Trebitsch Lincoln to go to the Devil and take his scheme with him!

He went—no offence!—to America. There, furious at the failure of whatever twisted scheme he really had in his mind, he published in the *New York World* a biting attack on this country, in which he declared that he had gone to England in the first place “with an unflinching determination to deceive the English in order to harm them,” and that only “a mischance” had prevented him from succeeding in “luring part of the British Fleet into the North Sea to be destroyed by the waiting German Fleet!” It was, on the whole, a pretty little story; perhaps its chief fault was that the German Fleet was not able to get out from its blockade to do the waiting referred to in his article. The reason he was so raw just at that time was that we had caused it to be known in certain quarters whose information always went direct to Germany that Mr. Lincoln had offered to betray to our authorities certain secret German plans. Which was, taking the man on his own authority, no more than the truth!

What he did in America during the next few months, I cannot say, but he was soon in trouble again, and this time for such an unromantic crime as forgery! It was proved in an American court that he had forged on various cheques the name of Benjamin Seebohm Rowntree, the well-known philanthropic millionaire, and Lincoln was promptly extradited and returned to England for trial, much as a kicking, squealing child is carried back to school for punishment after trying to run away. At the Old

Bailey, in July 1916, the full story of his numerous indiscretions was recounted to his own astonished ears, and he seemed both impressed and annoyed to find that we had so complete and damning a record. He was sentenced to three years' penal servitude, and I do not think he was punished unduly. Probably what hurt him even more than his sentence was the knowledge that, during all the years when he had been posing as the world's master-spy and deluding himself with the thought that he was deceiving both Germany and England about his real aims (which seem always to have been to gain money for Trebitsch!), he was really adequately watched by Scotland Yard who nevertheless had always considered him and his bungling as rather small game.

CHAPTER XI

The man who brought over money from Russia—The Chief Soviet Courier—a woman—comes over here as a newspaper correspondent—Anarchists who abuse the privileges of the Press—The armoury at Acton, with rifles for the Revolution—An out-of-work who was loyal—The English Colonel who was arrested for sedition—Was it a case of high treason?

OF all the anarchist agents who honoured us with a visit in pre-war days, I think the most dangerous was Axel Zachiarassen. A young man, dressed when I arrested him in a shabby brown suit, his mild blue eyes surely rather those of a dreamer than an incendiary, he looked about as unlike the stage anarchist as any man I have ever seen. In my experience, however, it is very often the dreamer who proves to be the really troublesome man, while the black-bearded, dark-eyed anarchist frequently proves to be nothing but a windbag after all.

He had come to England from Stockholm, where he had been closely watched by the Swedish police, and settled temporarily in London. He took his time on his travels, paying calls on behalf of the Russian revolutionary society he represented to various notable agitators abroad. After reaching London he was exemplary in conduct for a couple of weeks, and then, thinking that we had forgotten him, he visited a London anarchist and paid over to him a considerable sum of money. This sum we afterwards checked up, and it proved to be a very large amount; and the purpose for which the Russian contributors had intended it, was to stir up and help finance in England a General Strike to start on May Day, 1920. Unfortunately

for the extremists, and fortunately for us, the money was in safe keeping long before that date, and even when the General Strike did occur some years later, it failed to bring with it the Russian Dictatorship for which this man and his prototypes had so relentlessly and unscrupulously worked.

Zachiarassen's official reason for being in England was that he was a travelling correspondent of a Russian newspaper. I might mention that the disguise of a newspaper correspondent is one of the commonest chosen by anarchists and spies in this country; it gives them a cloak with which to cover otherwise suspicious movements and enquiries, and they usually say, when arrested, that they were getting information for a book on unrest in England! To anyone who has met real newspaper men, as I have, these poseurs are unmasksed with a few simple questions, for usually they do not know the first thing about newspaper work. But the matter is one which I have no doubt the genuine Pressmen resent, for it reflects unhappily on the integrity of the Press as a whole, at least in the minds of the general public.

I arrested Zachiarassen at a lodging-house in Camberwell, and he volubly protested his innocence. I noticed, however, that a quick glance went towards a very heavy pair of boots lying in the corner of the room. I had a look at them, and, as I more or less expected, the uppers were lined with waterproof pouches in which some of the money and bonds had doubtless come over from Russia. The man's waistcoat was also false-lined, and from one of the papers I found in it I obtained the principal facts that were used against him in his trial.

One letter which he had hidden about his person was addressed by name to Angelica Balabaroff, London, but unhappily had no other address. For weeks, all London was scoured in vain for this beautiful girl, who at that time

was the Chief Courier of the Soviet. Whether she had not arrived or whether she lay low on hearing of her confederate's arrest, I cannot tell. I was very sorry to miss the opportunity of a chat with her, for she was one of the most romantic and sinister figures of the Russian Revolution, and she should not have been in London at all.

Her name has attracted as much legend as fact, for she is extraordinarily elusive. It is said that both her parents were murdered by a Tsarist cavalry officer when she was a small child eighteen years ago, and that since then she has sworn to destroy all the leading countries of Europe by revolution. Like a bird of evil omen, she appeared in Italy just before Mussolini's dramatic intervention dragged that country back from the very brink of socialism. She was also seen in Spain and arrested there just before King Alfonso's flight, but she escaped from prison on the day the actual revolution occurred. England is her special foe, but only on that one occasion have we captured any proof that she has ever visited us personally. Scotland Yard has her dossier and appearance by heart, however, and, although she is unbelievably clever at disguises, I fancy that she will be unwise to risk another visit.

Zachiarassen, despite the absolutely damning evidence we produced at his trial, pleaded that he had not meant to harm this country but merely to do social work among its poorer classes! His ingenuous excuses did not save him, however, and I personally had the pleasure of deporting him from Newcastle on the 18th of July, 1919.

Early in the following month the Yard had another brush with its anarchist enemies. A policeman on point duty at Acton was approached by a middle-aged man in rather shabby clothes, and the man held out to him a folded paper. "This seems like something for you, mate," he said shortly. "A chap gave it to me round the

corner here. You might just say at the Station that an out-of-work ex-soldier gave it to you; we're not all such b——y pigs as these dirty Russians seem to think!"

The leaflet was addressed "To our Comrades, the out-of-work ex-soldiery of England," and was one of the finest bits of sedition I have ever read. It began with a lot of pretended sympathy for the men who "had served their country and been promised golden rewards by the capitalists, and are now left to starve in the streets." It told them of the sympathy of their Russian Comrades, and promised rich rewards. But the rewards, it explained, could not be given until "the shop-keeping and business classes have been destroyed, down to the man who keeps a stall in the street, and their women and children put to the sword." Finally, it invited those readers who wished to know more to apply by letter to an Acton box address.

I thought it better to apply in person, and did so. The little shop whose box address had been used was easily found, and when I explained to its owner what sort of activities were being conducted under cover of his business, he wanted to shut up the shop and come along with me to find the offender. I was sorry that regulations forbade that kind of retribution; my friend did not say a great deal, but the scowl on his face and the loving way he rubbed his clenched fists together made me loath to disappoint him.

When I reached the address he gave me of the man who had hired the use of the box address, I got rather a surprise. We had stumbled on a perfect little incubator of revolutions. The place contained seditious and revolutionary leaflets intended for the Army, Navy and civil population, suggesting all varieties of mutiny, murder and outrage. There were instructions, given in great detail and evidently drawn up by someone with military know-

ledge, on how supplies of rifles and explosives might be seized in public buildings, barracks and so on "when the revolution began." There were also rifles, revolvers and ammunition.

More arrests and deportations followed the arrival of our car-load of confiscated pamphlets and arms. Some of the documents, when they came to be examined, bore what appeared to be the signature of Lenin himself, but my own opinion is that these signatures were forgeries. Lenin was certainly a stick-at-nothing anarchist in the days before he rose to power, but afterwards there seems reason to believe that he learnt the uselessness of some of his former bloodthirsty ideas. On this occasion, as usual, the secret headquarters was run by foreigners, not by Britishers. British communists, at least those whom I have met, look askance at murder and bloodshed as political tools; they want to bring about their ideals by more legitimate means. It is a great pity that the foreign brand brings so much opprobrium to the home product; it must be almost as much of an embarrassment to the latter as it is to the Yard!

In the whole of my experience I only remember one famous British-born anarchist—or perhaps I should call him communist in this case. He was Colonel Malone, an M.P. and once member of a famous British regiment, and his arrest took place about at this time. I was called urgently to the Yard one evening, and shown a report of a speech made by Colonel Cecil Lestrange Malone, M.P., at the Albert Hall that afternoon. I must admit that it surprised me that a man who had taken the Army oath of loyalty to the King should afterwards have been willing to speak in such a fashion.

"We shall have to use lamp-posts and walls!" this man had declaimed to a great gathering in Kensington. "What are a few Churchills or a few Curzons on lamp-posts

compared to the bombing of harmless Egyptians in Egypt? We have to listen to the foul slanders of the capitalist Press. Make up your minds whether you are for the capitalist classes with their scurvy agents Churchill, Curzon, George, Thomas, Henderson and Brace, or whether you are of the communist party." And a good deal more in the same delightfully outspoken vein!

I went along immediately to Colonel Malone's house at Chalk Farm. My quarry wasn't there, but I found a few things that were interesting. Among other things, I discovered an envelope containing two cloakroom tickets issued by two different and distant stations. I had come across that dodge for hiding dangerous material before, so I took them along and collected the parcels. Those parcels were, in each case, bundles of typed sheets, and they were among the most interesting things I ever found in all my career.

They were headed "Red Officers' Course," and under the title was a brief explanatory paragraph. This said that the material in the booklet was never to be divulged to police authorities no matter how great the necessity. The Official Secrets Act unfortunately prevents my disclosing details about this material, but I can definitely say that it was the most damnable stuff I have ever seen during my whole career.

Malone's counsel made but little defence against the accusation of seditious speaking, but said that his client flatly denied all knowledge of the R.O.C. booklets. I gave my evidence, and an official of the Underwood Typewriter Company, having examined the typewriter I had found at Malone's flat, stated that the documents had been typed on that identical machine as far as he could tell from minor inequalities of type, etc. The counsel stated that the only explanation that occurred to him was that the machine had

been used by some person other than Colonel Malone, in the latter's absence, and that the cloakroom tickets had been "planted" in the flat by some evilly disposed person. The counsel for the prosecution merely detailed all known facts, produced the booklets for the court's examination, and pointed out the clause in the booklet saying that ownership must be denied at all costs. He also expressed his surprise that a man who had taken the King's commission and accepted the King's money for military service, and who, in his character of an officer and a gentleman, had represented a British constituency, East Leyton, in Parliament, should have been involved in such matters.

Malone was told by the Bench that if the booklet production was brought home to him, he might be tried for High Treason. For some reason, however, there seemed to be an inclination not to stress too much this part of the case. The Red Officers' Course had received too much publicity already ever to do England much harm in the future, and the tendency was to leave it at that. Malone, however, was given six months in the second division, and I should think his counsel and he might well have exchanged congratulations afterwards, for, as was stated in court, he was perilously near a very much graver sentence.

CHAPTER XII

I say good-bye to the Yard—Anarchism nowadays—Dramatic moves of the last few years—More arms and ammunition seized—The Zinovieff Letter—the truth—The Arcos Raid and its consequences—Will England ever tolerate a Russian Dictator?

THE work of a detective must surely be among the hardest of the world's tasks to lay aside. When I was a young man, I used to look forward to the time when I would be able to live at ease in the country. In practice, I have found that I spend just as much time on detective work now that I am retired as I used to do when I was at the Yard. But now, of course, it is not official. But for all that I have handled one or two interesting little cases of late years, especially over work done in connection with the Department of Military Intelligence. Of those, unfortunately, I may not speak; but I think any record of anti-anarchist work in England would be incomplete without some reference to the Zinovieff Letter and the Arcos Raid. I had no official connection with either, having then retired; but I think I may be able to throw light on a few points in both which may interest the public.

Before either of them, however, a Yard raid took place which had fairly fruitful results. That was just two months after my retirement, and the detective officer of the Special Branch who was in charge of it was intimately known to me. Information was received that certain munitions of war were loaded aboard a ship at that moment lying in the Victoria Docks. A lightning raid took place, and the vessel was systematically searched. Under a great cargo

of bales in the hold were discovered 67 rifles and 7,000 rounds of ammunition; and the skipper was asked to explain. He protested innocence, but was requested to answer for the contraband before other authorities. Only a week later, another ship was raided, and its hold gave up up 37 automatic pistols and 3,000 rounds of ammunition! On those discoveries, since I did not myself investigate the cases, I have no comments to make; but I believe that the Yard had a good many, and that other important discoveries were made as a result.

The General Strike of 1926, if not directly or completely an anarchist effort to seize the reins of Government from the King and Parliament, was, according to certain authorities at the time, considerably financed from Moscow, the money being sent officially to "help our comrades in distress in England." Whatever the intention, the effect was to prolong the Strike towards a point where it might have resulted in the rule of our Empire being given over to the officials of the Trades Unions, had not the humour, common-sense and courage of the enormous majority of Britishers made that Strike a mere colossal joke. Volunteers in tens of thousands besieged railway stations, begging for a chance to realize a childhood ambition to drive puff-puffs. Underground trains were run almost from the first day by delighted college and university boys. 'Buses bearing such legends as "Don't throw stones at the passengers—they are in sufficient danger already!" and "Admission on business only" (the latter over broken windows) traversed the streets at speeds hitherto unknown. Special Constables whose sole uniform was an armlet drank tea from the billycans of striker pickets and enthusiastically took bets on the date of the collapse of the Strike. Instead of paralysis descending on the whole country and streets being left dark, unguarded and unscavenged, volunteers got all vital

services running at once and time-tables were back almost to normal within twelve days; and in laughter which reverberated all over Europe the terrible strike collapsed, its chief achievement having been so to cripple Trades Union funds that the working men themselves (who never wanted to strike at all) will feel the shortage painfully for years to come.

The general facts about the Zinovieff Letter of 1924 are too well known to need reiteration. One or two details about it, however, may not be quite so familiar. It contained wild statements about seducing British troops from their loyalty, causing revolution in this country, and using the British communists as tools whereby the work of incendiарism could be carried out safely by its Russian instigators, who, if "victory" was gained, would then come in and take the profits. The letter was indited in a tone of utter contempt for the British communists, and was on the lines of Zinovieff's admitted policy of "supporting Mr. MacDonald as the rope supports the hanging man."

The letter came to light in somewhat the same way as the gunpowder plot of Guy Fawkes. A copy of it was said to have been shown to a London business man by an agent who was a friend of his, on the ground that he had better take certain action in regard to some of his Government securities. He, it is alleged, copied the letter and handed it at once to the police authorities. High Government officials were warned, and it was decided to publish the contents of the letter in all the leading newspapers, as warning to British people of all political opinions as to what Russia intended for them. Meanwhile, the police pursued enquiries as to the authenticity of the letter. It is still forbidden to say what those enquiries were, under the Official Secrets Acts; but I know personally the Inspectors who were in charge of them, and I know that absolute and

irrefutable proof was obtained that the letter was genuine. And, indeed, what more striking endorsement was necessary than that Zinovieff was shortly afterwards ignominiously dismissed from the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party, for having so seriously blundered.

Of the Arcos Raid, a little more may now be disclosed. That story began by the disappearance of a highly confidential document from the War Office; and although feverish activities immediately resulted in the Special Department, the public was told nothing. One after another, clues were picked up, and every one led straight to the headquarters of the All Russian Co-operative Society at Soviet House in Moorgate, E.C. This concern, briefly known as ARCos, had already been in trouble a number of times and its legal adviser had been deported a short while previously. Consequently, a raid was immediately organized and carried out on May 12th, 1927, by the Special Department detectives.

Policemen ran from room to room, constables prevented all attempts to enter or leave the building, clerks were told to sit where they were, and a quantity of papers were confiscated for examination. Meanwhile, the senior officer in charge of the raid made his way swiftly to the cypher room. That room had no handle to the door, and a slight delay was caused because of the difficulty in entering it. Meanwhile the officer could hear the frantic rustling and shuffling of papers within. Finally, in a frenzy of impatience, he forced his way in, and gripped by the collar the secret room's single occupant—a middle-aged clerk who was savagely thrusting documents on to a pile of burning papers in the fireplace. That room was the only one in the building which had a fireplace!

Flinging his man into the charge of a sergeant who had just entered, the detective pulled off the papers from the

fire and tried to smother the flames, burning his hands in doing so. The clerk struggled fiercely to prevent him, but was capably held back. Beneath the building was discovered a secret photostat room. Absolute proofs were found that for years Arcos had been nothing but a clearing house and link between anarchist agitators in Russia and their agents here.

On May 20th, 1927, all diplomatic privileges were withdrawn from the Soviet, and the guilty Arcos representatives were ordered to leave the country within ten days. Even the British Labour representatives were disgusted at this open abuse of British hospitality, and later administered several severe rebuffs to their Soviet comrades as a direct result of the Arcos trouble.

There is, I think, little more I can say about my personal contact with anarchism in England and its results. I have dealt in this book with facts known to me and which either I myself or detective friends of mine have checked beyond possibility of error. No intention has been present to make my stories alarmist propaganda against anarchism; I believe, indeed, that the sound sense of our nation will prevent any such outbreak as took place in Russia when the Tsar was deposed and murdered and the reins of power seized by a brutal minority, who succeeded in holding them only by terrorism. That era is passing in Russia already, and with its passing a good deal of danger to ourselves passes also.

King George is not in personal danger, partly because of the never-sleeping efficiency of Scotland Yard but chiefly because the loyalty and regard of his people is so great that no anarchist would dare to attempt his life. Anarchists are, as a rule, contemptible cowards, and never if they can help it risk their own precious skins in their murder attempts. I would not say, however, that England

is entirely safe from sporadic outbreaks, fostered among miserable out-of-works by ingratiating foreign agitators, who, as in the past, would offer to supply arms and ammunition to those who were crazed and starved enough to use them. When a man's wife and children are hungry, he will do most things; and the anarchist agents use devilish cunning in fostering such conditions by advising strikes and then making use of them. Such outbreaks, more or less severe, are bound to mean heartbreaking tragedy. For the sake of the population, law and order must be maintained, and sections of the community which prove dangerous to the rest must be disarmed in the cause of civil peace. Scotland Yard does its best to prevent such stores of arms and ammunition from being made or distributed, and to stop the spreading of leaflets drawn up by callous self-seekers who speciously ask the working man to fight and die so that those who draw up the leaflets may draw the profits in a revolutionary state.

The real remedy, however, lies in the hands of the British working men themselves, and in the simple advice to think well before they act. The men who seek to lure them on to revolution against their King are, in nearly every case, foreigners—Russians, Jews, Italians and Spaniards who have been deported from their own countries because they were useless there. They are men who live, not by honest work themselves but by receiving traitor's gold; they ask loyal Englishmen to share that gold with them. They are selfish, callous, brutal, cowardly, creeping creatures, working in the dark because they are ashamed of honest daylight, and behind their loudest protestations and their biggest crocodile tears may be found always an infinite consideration for their own profit and safety. Let them throw their own bombs and do their own fighting, and this country need never do more than laugh at them.

But give them too much rein, act on their oily arguments without pausing to weigh them, and the British Monarchy and honour will be swept away together and a foreigner raised to be our Empire's dictator within the next twenty years.

BOOK II
ESPIONAGE

CHAPTER I

How the Spy system works—Spies in peace-time—Spy Clubs—Letter-boxes; travelling agents; carrier pigeons—How information is sent overseas—When the Kaiser visited us—I am decorated by him.

SO much nonsense has recently been written about the sober business of espionage by emotional ladies who, having once extracted an unimportant secret from a soldier friend, now feel entitled to publish hysterical meanderings anent their “adventures,” that the public has perhaps begun to wonder whether spies really exist or not. As the individual responsible for having had a number of them shot at the Tower, I can say confidently that they do! I can also say that my experience goes to show that there are few women spies, and that they are counted too unreliable to be of much actual danger. Mata Hari, now that romance has been busy dressing her sordid figure in frills of fancy, has become prettily effective to the imagination; but before I ran them to earth, two of the men whose stories I shall tell later were responsible for the German raids on Scarborough and Whitby, and that is stronger stuff.

Espionage, in actual fact, is a nasty, dangerous, thankless task. Often, it is deputed to criminals, who, having formerly shown considerable cunning, are released from a long prison sentence on promising to act as secret service agents abroad. It must be understood that I speak of the methods of foreign countries—if Great Britain employs spies, I know nothing of them, since my own work has

only been in the direction of spy detection. Spies are paid wages just like you and I, but they don't usually get them regularly. They are forced to trust to the honour of those who employ them; and, as the latter prefer to pay by results, and the agents, if they are to live, must be paid more regularly than that, trouble ensues. I have seen a good many secret spy letters, and a good twenty-five per cent. of them included really frantic appeals for money with which to buy the bare necessities of life. On the whole I am heartily sorry for spies; they have a rotten time and a nasty end, unless they are exceptionally lucky.

Here, briefly, is the system on which all espionage is carried out. A man, disgraced or anxious to leave his own country, is approached by certain authorities and told that his passage will be paid and a certain wage guaranteed him if he will undertake in writing to act as a spy. If he does so, he is usually asked to discover some definite bit of information, such as the disposition of coal in the seaports of a country supposedly inimical, or the tests being carried out with some new gun. In certain cases, he is sent first to an official spy school, where he is instructed in the use and manufacture of various "inks," which dry on paper leaving no mark, but will become visible on heating or treating with some suitable chemical. There, also, he learns how to correspond with his headquarters when he has succeeded in collecting useful information.

Such a school as this was run during the War in the occupied part of Belgium, and I shall have something more to say of it in my chapters on war-time spying. Of the spy clubs, "letter boxes," travelling agents, carrier pigeons and other methods of transferring items of information, however, I had best give some details now, for the sake of subsequent clarity. The spy at the school is commonly directed that his first place of call, when he arrives in the

country where he is to work, will be a certain club, where he is to ask for a specified individual. To this man he is to give signs, or perhaps introductory letters. Meanwhile, he is to pursue activities which will give the impression that he is an innocent visitor. Perhaps he is to act as if he were a commercial traveller, tourist, or newspaper correspondent, or anything which gives him reason for travelling and sight-seeing, and for asking leading questions. Before the War in Rotterdam a block of offices bore the name "Dierks & Co." Officially that firm traded all sorts of commodities to Britain, and had many representatives here; actually it was just a clearing house for information from spies in England. The name of Dierks & Co. features a good deal in this story later on.

Arrived at the Club the newcomer discovers it to be, in most cases, a small and select affair known perhaps as "The British Ruritanians' Society," the name corresponding to his own nationality. Most of the members are honest traders who meet and talk tenderly of "home" over their lager and sauerkraut; but one or two—those, in fact, to whom the letters of introduction are addressed—are adventurers like himself. From them he receives warnings of any anti-spy activities of the moment, brings whatever verbal messages have been entrusted to him, arranges for his letters to be received and passed on by a suitable agent, and then takes himself off to the particular station where his spying is to be done.

If possible, he receives help from a local agent, and perhaps stays as a guest at the latter's house. He discovers whatever he can by any methods that suggest themselves to him, and sends his news, generally written in some form of "invisible ink" between the lines of an innocuous letter from one friend to another, to the agent who is to handle his correspondence. This agent, living in the same country,

sends on the information in a letter of his own; it may, for safety's sake, go to two or three addresses in, say, England, before finally going abroad invisibly written between the lines of an ordinary innocent business letter.

Nearly always, there is an intermediary firm to whom it is sent—a firm like Dierks & Co., situate in a country which would be non-belligerent in almost any struggle, and may therefore be expected to be neutral in time of possible war. This firm, receiving the letter, passes on the news in its own fashion to its real employers. Necessarily there is some delay in getting important information across, and if the risk seems worth it, the news may be sent direct to the firm in the neutral country. It was through such efforts to expedite vital news that many of the captures of spies by Scotland Yard were made during the War.

One point is that the presence of an intermediary firm makes cover for the sending of the wages of the "employee" at regular intervals. This is all right in theory, but in practice there seems to be a notable shortage of revenue to be spent on spies' wages. Urgent appeals are often followed by threats that, if more money is not forthcoming soon, the agent will take himself off on a different line of business, either honest or perhaps the selling of information from the country that has been so miserly over his stipend. Then follows a smooth warning, couched in terms that cannot be misunderstood. Unless the spy behaves himself, and works harder in future, information will be allowed to leak out that he *is* a spy, and his employers, denying all responsibility for him, will self-righteously demand that he be punished for attempting to endanger the friendly relations between two great and trusting powers! Usually, with such a letter, a little money is enclosed.

So the discordant game goes on, with fear, cupidity,

suspicion and veiled menace as its keynotes. If it is considered safe, the information may perhaps be sent by carrier pigeon. Once the bird is safely released, the method is a good one, for it is not likely to be stopped before reaching its destination, and even if it is, there is no trace of its port of departure. Before the War, a number of aliens on the East Coast were asked not to keep pigeons; it seemed a favourite pastime with them, and they usually bred fast carriers quite extensively. It is only fair to say, however, that none of them were actually caught in the act of despatching information in that way.

All these general facts were known to Scotland Yard long before the War, just as they were known to the police services of all civilized nations. Like everyone else, we tried to keep watch on suspected aliens, and in one or two cases, I personally had the job of arresting known spies, and proving their guilt in court. Their stories I shall tell in my next two chapters. Apart from those examples, there were times when I had reason to suspect people against whom I could prove nothing; I will give a brief list of facts here which subsequently showed in a more sinister light.

In 1909, a club was being run in Piccadilly Circus organized, according to report, by a German Army Colonel and a certain German ex-Naval officer. That winter a number of German members of the club hunted with British packs, and it was a significant point that all were cavalry officers of notable crack regiments. It was said at the time, perhaps without foundation, that these officers were considering the land over which they rode more with a cavalryman's eye than a hunter's.

A German by the name of Martinus Seidler managed to pass himself off for a short time as a Dutchman, until I found reason to believe that his passport was not in

order. On examination it proved to be false, and he was duly interned; luckily for himself he had not then even had time to begin his spying activities. Had he done so, the War then being in progress, he would have suffered a sharper check.

A somewhat similar case was that of the brother of a certain Continental Countess. I raided this man's flat in North London, but he also only paid the penalty of an untrustworthy alien in the land of a country at war—he was interned.

On the whole, spies in this country did not get a great deal of encouragement. They were not very difficult to deal with, for we had a perfect organization with which to counter them, and we had, even in pre-war days, a very considerable amount of theoretical knowledge of the details of their methods such as would have caused something approaching heart failure in certain high quarters abroad, had we paraded it. Instead of which, of course, we deliberately posed as simple old John Bull, and hid our smile behind our hand while the enemy walked gaily into our traps.

In 1911, when the Kaiser visited England, I had the job of attending him on his tour because, at that time, I was acquainted with the playful ways of our anarchists, and was able to assist in keeping his royal person safe from attack. In my duties I naturally came into contact with him personally, and then I had need of all my tact. As a man I did not dislike him; he seemed impulsive, good-natured, quick in anger or in forgiveness, and tremendously, vitally interested in all that he saw. He was for ever asking questions, making comments, or turning to one of his secretaries to order him to note some investigation that was to be made.

He was, I remember, intensely interested in aviation.

At that time most European countries except Germany scoffed at the idea of flying; not so the Kaiser. What astonished him, I believe, more than anything else he saw in this country was our lack of what is now called "air-mindedness." All Germany was interested in the experimental work of Count Zeppelin, while to our people general flying was still something of a joke.

We had no special trouble from anarchists while the Kaiser was here, and my duties were not arduous. I was rather surprised, therefore, when soon after our distinguished visitor had left our shores, I received an official communication saying that his Imperial Majesty was pleased to recognize my services on his behalf by conferring on me the famous order of Officer of the Red Eagle of Prussia. I have the jewelled decoration in a case on the wall of my office, and it is before me now as I write. The tragic War Lord little thought, when conferring it, that I should next come to his notice as agent in the detection of his spies in England.

CHAPTER II

I arrest a Doctor of Philosophy during the Agadir incident—What he wanted to know about our Navy—He asked a solicitor to help him!—The Spy School at Amsterdam loses a promising pupil.

THIS is a story of the River Yealm and Plymouth Hoe in 1911, where a descendant of the Admiral who “finished his game and beat the Spaniards too” played another and more scientific game with a pupil of the Rotterdam Spy School, and won that also. And it happened at a time when all Europe was desperately uneasy at the first gathering war-clouds on the horizon, still no bigger than a man’s hand, and at the warning rumble of distant thunder at Agadir when Sir Edward Grey in his own subsequent words “thought the Fleet might be attacked at any moment” by the Germans.

A German Ober-Lieutenant of the 15th Hussar Regiment took a lease of the *Egret* houseboat, then lying on the Yealm near Plymouth, and a very pleasant gentleman he seemed. He speedily made acquaintance with a number of Plymouth people, moving in the best society, and giving delightfully tasteful parties on his boat. Particularly, he invited to such functions young naval men with go-ahead ideas; and he would entertain them with lively arguments on the efficiency of the German cavalry, and take a deep interest in their own “shop” talk about naval manœuvres and the future developments of naval warfare. His wines, which were of the best, were unstinted, but it seems that he found our pre-war young Naval officers uncommonly steady in the head, for he was forced to try other methods of obtaining the information he needed.

Particularly he became friends with a hard-headed local solicitor of Scottish descent, and a local gentleman descended on the maternal side from Sir Francis Drake. With these two men, in the comfortable cabin of his houseboat, he talked evening after evening, discussing the possibilities of the new and powerful German Navy in war (but never telling anything not already publicly known), and asking all sorts of searching leading questions about British Naval matters. He laughingly referred to the Morocco trouble, and asked his friends, "out of interest as a debatable subject," what chances they thought the British Navy would have if war resulted, for at that time our respective statesmen were at one another's throats. Germany, he said, could muster all her new fleet in a dozen hours; Britain would have to recall her ships from the four quarters of the globe, and Germany could break up each squadron or little fleet in detail before any real combination could be effected. What steps, he asked, would be taken to prevent such a thing—just as an argument!

At the same time, these two gentlemen discovered, Dr. Schultz (he was a Doctor of Philosophy at a famous German College) was asking all sorts of questions of his young Naval acquaintances as to whether sailors were being recalled from leave, which ships were provendered, coaled and ready to leave port at a moment's notice, what orders various warships had received, how soon our Mediterranean Fleet and our Eastern Fleet could be brought into home waters, and so on. The Herr Ober-Lieutenant was still as charming as ever, and he asked his questions casually or playfully; but he began to arouse suspicion. One morning, when I went to report at the Yard, I was told the facts of the case and told to run down to Plymouth and amuse myself for a few days.

I called on the solicitor and found that there was definite

reason why Dr. Schultz should have professional attention. The previous night he had propounded to my vis-à-vis and his friend a scheme of startling simplicity. He explained that he was an agent for a great German newspaper syndicate, and that his present task was to collect interesting news about England, particularly in connection with her Army and Navy. What he wanted, he explained, was to obtain the services of one or two educated men whose position enabled them to get interesting news stories, and from them obtain a regular supply of articles on Naval matters suitable for publication in leading German newspapers. If, in addition, they could supply occasional articles from outspoken Naval officers on such matters as the development of battleship construction, the relative questions of armour and guns, the activity of British submarines and so on, he would be well pleased. Pay, he said, was high; he could offer them £50 to £60 for a trial month if really good exclusive material was available, and a regular income of £1,000 to £1,500 a year thereafter.

The two gentlemen had asked for time to consider the proposition; I had a talk with both of them and suggested that they might offer to comply with the terms subject to a clause that Dr. Schultz would require them to do nothing dishonourable or to harm their country. After all, the man might be all he said, in which case it would be foolish to turn down his offer, subject to that one clause; or if he were a spy, we should then have definite evidence to go upon. Meanwhile, I made arrangements with the postal authorities to note the destinations of his letters.

He was delighted, and immediately wrote letters to a "M. Pierre Thissen" at Ostend. That time, Scotland Yard was one up on Herr Steinhauer, the German Secret Service chief, for we knew perfectly well that "M. Thissen" was really Max Tobler, head of the German spy school at

Rotterdam. And, sure enough, the replies to Dr. Schultz were postmarked Rotterdam. I thought my suspicions justified me in opening the reply letters. In addition to a considerable sum of money, they contained congratulations on the "speed with which you have conducted this business," and a warning to keep clear of the "damned English Police."

The next step was taken by the solicitor, who entered into the spirit of the thing with a dry, judicial humour. He drew up a regular lawyer's agreement that he would act as military and naval correspondent for the South Coast of England, and he and Schultz both signed it. Finally, he took it back to his office to make a minor alteration, and on the way called at the house of a friend. I was waiting at that house, and I took a copy of the document before it was posted back again to Dr. Schultz. Between us that solicitor and myself concocted some tall yarns, which we duly passed on to Schultz, who was almost purring with complacence at the success of his plans. If his employers really believed those stories about imaginary British battleships (including one, which we said was under design, which was to be fitted with short metal wings to enable it to skim the surface for greater speed!) they must have been even more solemn than we supposed.

Schultz himself, however, was no fool, and despite our greatest precautions, he came along to the solicitor one morning fuming with rage and fear. I was talking over our next moves at the time, and at the announcement of the visitor I had to slip into an adjoining room. Schultz said that he had reason to believe that his letters were being tampered with "by a rival newspaper gang in England." His new friend was ready for that. "Have your letters addressed in future at my office," he said sympathetically, while I grinned appreciatively at his tones. "And cable

your important communications in code; no one would suspect then." Schultz was vastly relieved, and our amazing information went thereafter from the lawyer's office, where I could study the communications without any danger of discovery.

However, the affair was not really a joke, and we had to bring it to an end. A letter from Tobler at Rotterdam said that there must be "no more of these cursed cables" in case suspicion was aroused. The letter went on—"How do matters stand with the Commander and Lieutenant" (two visionary figures I myself had constructed). "The Reserve officers you ask about are no use—they cannot procure us any valuable secrets because they have not access to official books and reports. You must work harder. Unless more information is forthcoming, no more money will be paid. Let me know whether we can meet in Holland or Belgium, and whether you can bring the Commander or Lieutenant with you. Official information is what is wanted, and this you must secure at all costs."

That letter I commandeered, and with it in my pocket I went aboard the *Egret* to see Dr. Schultz. When I told him he was a spy, he looked at me in silence, while I could hear the water lapping against the vessel's side. I expected a violent denial, but the Professor of Philosophy was uppermost at that moment. "I must congratulate you on the efficacy of your Police, sir," he said calmly. "I presume you will give me time to pack a toothbrush and some pyjamas?" On the way to the station, he admitted that he was not altogether sorry the game was up. "I am an officer, not a spy," he declared passionately. "I have hated this work from the beginning, but they exerted pressure on me to come here. Fighting—yes; but not this kind of thing!"

He was tried at Plymouth for espionage, and convicted without any chance of a favourable verdict, for the evidence was very strong. His sentence was twenty-one months in the second division, and I think the Bench was really rather sorry for him. I was myself; but of course we could not tolerate that sort of thing in this country.

As little as possible was said at the trial concerning Mr. Thissen of Ostend, and his double, Mr. Tobler of Rotterdam. But that eminent gentleman either took fright or—more probably—was officially moved on. At any rate, he was superseded within a month of Schultz's conviction, by a man of the name of R. H. Peterssen, and Tobler himself dropped out of our records. I am sure the German authorities were not aware of the fact that we were so cognizant of their movements, or they would have been more wary; also, I think that Herr Tobler did not figure again in active spy work against this country.

Why, I cannot say. Perhaps he was returned to his old Army commission, though I do not fancy so. Perhaps he was convicted on some trumpery charge and sent to prison to reflect on his folly in bungling that promising case of the Plymouth spy. Perhaps he committed suicide in despair at an official reprimand. We do not know. He just slipped back into that impenetrable blackness from which spies emerge and into which, unless they are very lucky, they in time return. Usually, that blackness is death; for once the unsleeping eye of the Yard is on them, they do not often elude it. For the sake of our country's safety, we cannot afford to forget even for a moment the whereabouts of a man whose name has once been docketed in our "Espionage" pigeon-holes at Westminster, until the last entry of all is neatly made in red ink, giving name, date and place, and the mystic letters, O.K.

CHAPTER III

Mr. Peterssen comes into action—Captain Grant makes a mistake—
An old friend—The Navy sees it through—Exit Heinrich Grosse;
the girl he left behind him.

MR. PETERSSEN of Rotterdam, whatever his faults, was a "go-getter"! He picked up the challenge his predecessor, Herr Tobler, had been forced to drop; he set out at once to try to obtain that longed-for information about the dreaded British Navy. If anything, Mr. Peterssen was a trifle over-eager; he would have been wiser to let things settle down a little first.

William Salter, a retired naval man living in Portsmouth, found his pension of five shillings a day not enough to supply many luxuries, and in the hope of augmenting it put an advertisement in a local paper offering to do enquiry work. He received only one answer to the advertisement, but that interested him a good deal. It was from a certain Captain Grant, asking if Salter would carry out enquiries concerning Naval coal supplies at Portsmouth, and suggesting an interview. The old sea-dog (which is exactly what Salter looked like) must have seemed a simple and unsuspecting tool to Captain Grant at that interview; at least, the man seems to have hidden very little from him.

Captain Grant explained in perfect English that he was the representative of a certain famous German coal magnate, one Herr Peterssen of Hamburg. This great man had heard rumours of a forthcoming coal strike in England, and he wished to know which ports were inadequately supplied with coal so that, the moment the strike broke out,

he could sell German coal in those ports. He asked Salter what his pension was, sympathized with him on what he called a miserly return for a life of service, and said that he himself earned £15 a month, a reasonable proportion of which might be deflected into Salter's pockets if he proved useful. Even at that first interview, he seems to have taken it for granted that he was dealing with a traitor, for he broadly hinted that he would also pay to know the number of men aboard certain war vessels then in Portsmouth Harbour.

He would have been alarmed had he followed Salter when the latter stumped off after the interview, having promised to give a definite answer later. For the old seaman went straight to the Admiral-Superintendent of the Port and laid the facts before him. After a few minutes' conversation, that officer asked Salter if he was willing to keep the spy in play while the authorities were informed, and, from what I know of Salter, I imagine he might so far have overcome his awe of authority as to hazard a comprehensive wink. Anyway, the next day he went along to Captain Grant with a list of "facts," and meanwhile I was telephoned for to make a visit to Portsmouth.

My first place of call was Captain Grant's lodging, at the house of a Mrs. Jackson at Southsea. She herself was a sailor's wife, and she had no suspicion of her lodger. In fact, so far had he advanced in her good graces that he was actually out fishing with her pretty daughter when I called at the house, and I learned that he used to go out with her almost every afternoon. I showed my authority and went up to have a look at his room.

For a spy, he was a singularly unsuspicious man. His desk was unlocked and open, with a litter of papers spread untidily across it. On top of the desk was a photograph of himself and a girl whom I took to be Miss Jackson;

and there was something about the heavy face of the man that seemed vaguely familiar. In the desk, I came across a big-scale map of Portsmouth Dockyard, an automatic pistol fully loaded and with a good deal of loose ammunition beside it, a number of letters in German or English, and three letters the arrangement of whose German words seemed to me a little unnatural. I am familiar with the German language, and I sat down on the bed in that little room and spent ten precious minutes trying to puzzle out why the words were arranged in that somewhat stilted style.

At last, I gave it up, and rapidly copied the contents of the letters that puzzled me before returning them to their place in the desk. Finally, having made everything shipshape, I went away, warning Mrs. Jackson to say nothing of my visit.

That night was a busy one for me. First of all, I made a number of telephonic enquiries to Scotland Yard, asking for certain details concerning their photographic records of dangerous criminals, and requesting a selection of a named dozen or so old photographs therefrom. Then I sat down in my own lodgings and had a go at the copies of those three letters. I have always been interested in cyphers, but that one very nearly beat me. Finally, after hours of puzzling and covering sheet after sheet of paper with attempted solutions, I discovered the clues. For half an hour more I worked, making decyphered records of those three letters. Then, straightening my back with a groan, I saw that my windows were palely lighted. I had spent the whole night at my puzzles!

I got a couple of hours' sleep and then went along to see the Admiral-Superintendent. I took him a copy of my night's work, and very grim he was about it. He said that Salter had instructions to go back to see our man that

morning, as he had been coached in certain information which he was to seek concerning "Captain Grant."

To fill in the time before I could make my arrest, therefore, I made a few enquiries in the neighbourhood of Captain Grant's lodging. Sure enough, he had been asking in various places about supplies of coal in the Dockyard, names of war vessels in port, their armament, and so on. At a little newsagent's shop, the proprietor told me that Captain Grant, who was a customer of his, had made extensive enquiries because his (the newsagent's) son was in the Navy. Grant had said that he had a bet with another man on the number of men of all ranks in Portsmouth, and, unsuspiciously enough, the newsagent had tried to discover the number for him. Finally, I went back to my own lodgings, and found a man waiting there for me. He had come post-haste down from the Yard that morning with some proofed copies of photographs from the Records Department. I turned over the reddish, rather indistinct prints slowly—and suddenly saw staring up at me the face of the man in the picture at Grant's lodgings. It was thinner, tighter and bearded instead of clean-shaven, but there was no mistaking it. I turned the picture over; on the back was scrawled—"Heinrich Grosse, Captain German Merchant Service, arrested Hamburg 10/8/11 on charge forgery, released after two days' imprisonment, believed sent England. Convicted Singapore 1898 for uttering forged notes. 10 years' penal servitude."

I had noted the photograph when it was first filed, in the ordinary way of my duty as a member of the Special Department, and my memory had not played me false. I locked the picture in my despatch-case together with the cyphered copies of the letters, and then made a number of enquiries about my quarry. I ascertained from the

Detective-Constable I had left near the house that "Grant" had not yet emerged for his afternoon stroll with Miss Jackson, and then went in. He was standing in the little parlour, all ready dressed to go out, a soft grey hat and smart cane in his hand, talking to Mrs. Jackson, and as I entered, the girl, a dark, handsome little thing, came tripping into the room.

"I'm very sorry, Miss Jackson," I said apologetically, "but I'm afraid I must arrest Captain Grant, on a charge of espionage."

The girl changed colour, but that was all. Grosse himself shouted, "It's a lie!" and half raised his stick to attack me. Then he thought better of it. "Don't believe him, my dear," he muttered, "the man must be mad. It will soon be cleared up and I'll be back here." Mrs. Jackson went over to comfort her daughter, and I took my man away. It was one of those little tragic cameos that come into a policeman's life not infrequently; but as it proved after, the girl was perhaps luckier than she might have been had she married him.

He was tried at Portsmouth Town Hall on December 12th, 1911, and I produced the decyphered copies of the three letters I had seen on his desk, and also the originals which I had collected after his arrest. All three were from R. H. Peterssen, the successor to Herr Tobler of Rotterdam. The cypher was a cunning one, allowing the final letter to read quite innocently as a business communication about prices of coal in England and the possibilities of selling German coal here in the event of a strike.

Decyphered, letter number one stated that the writer had received the dossier of Herr Grosse from a known source, and also facts that showed that he could be useful to him. Certain information would be given, said the writer, and if the answers proved satisfactory, Herr Grosse

would be released from his prison sentence under supervision. He was then to proceed to Hamburg railway station, and there he would find a man waiting for him who would carry a handkerchief in the left hand. He, Herr Grosse, was also to carry a handkerchief so, in order that recognition might be effected.

The second letter confirmed Herr Grosse's appointment as "an accredited agent in the service of the Fatherland," and promised that regular payments should be made him if his information was of a useful kind. Both letters were quite innocent on the surface, and would never have aroused suspicion but for the fact that they were phrased, in order to comply with the cypher rules, in a somewhat archaic and awkward style.

The third letter was the one before which Herr Grosse's case gave way. It said: "Is it really true that the new submarines are being fitted out with guns? How and where are these mounted? Where are the guns stored for arming merchant steamers in war time? What sort of guns have the mine-laying cruisers *Naiad*, *Thetis* and *Latona*? Have these got wireless? How much coal is there on shore? Is there no more coal in the dockyards than stated? More details required about the systems of range-finding. Your information about a 'floating conning-tower' is surely imaginary? More details needed about the new British howitzers. What range have they?" As usual, it was signed by R. H. Peterssen.

Grosse was committed to Winchester Assizes. His defence was useless under the weight of evidence against him, and he was sentenced to three years' penal servitude. That ended in September 1914, after the outbreak of war, and consequently, on his release, he was re-arrested and interned, and died before the War ended. At his Portsmouth trial, I noted Mrs. Jackson and her daughter in the

court, but they were not present at the Winchester Assizes. At the pronouncement of the spy's sentence in the latter, however, a girl in the court broke down and had to be taken outside. She was a German, and said she was Grosse's fiancée; and she was heartbroken as much at the attentions he had paid to Miss Jackson of Southsea as at his subsequent sentence for spying. I never saw or heard of her again.

CHAPTER IV

Herr Steinhauer pays us a visit, incognito—When the War broke out—
Preparing for new duties.

IN 1912 we were honoured by a visit from the man who had been, in 1905, according to our police records, made head of the German Secret Service. A personal friend of the Kaiser, a handsome, soldierly figure who had seen more of courts than camps, the Herr Steinhauer was an exceedingly efficient choice for the position. A brilliant educational record showed exceptional mental abilities; he was possessed of a diplomatic mind as well as an unlimited capacity for organization, and he took up espionage control, as far as can be ascertained, as his own choice, having specially asked the boon of promotion to the post from his royal master.

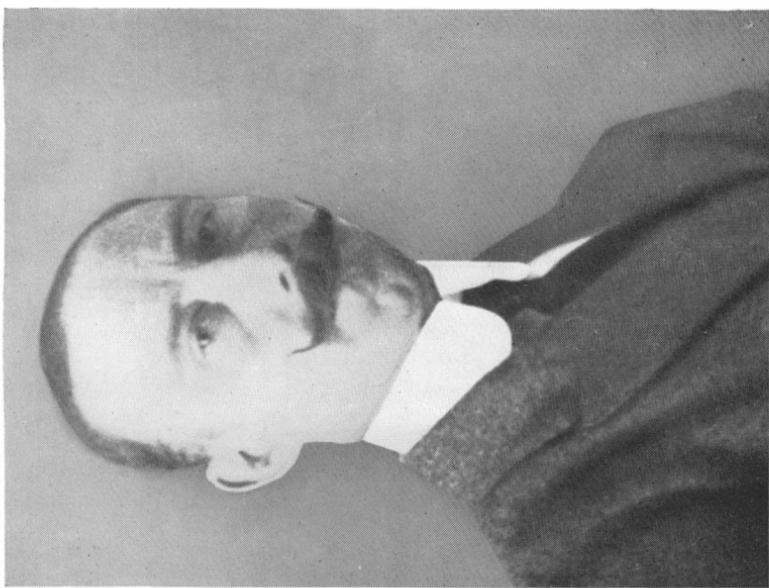
He certainly never lacked courage. It was reported that he visited England in 1908, and three years later a detective at Southampton believed that he caught a glimpse of the keen, dark face of the spy chief among a crowd coming from the docks after the berthing of a great liner. All efforts to trace him, however, were abortive, and though there were several German names on the passenger list, they all seemed quite innocent ones. But in 1912, in the middle of July, he was noticed on the platform at York; and from that moment till he stepped aboard an insignificant German-bound vessel at Harwich he was never entirely unattended.

From York he went to London, and took up quarters

at a big hotel under the name of Mr. Max Westhaus. He spent most of his time writing letters, of which we subsequently noted the addresses for future reference. Eight of the men to whom those letters were addressed were arrested trying to leave for Germany in August, 1914; one died before the outbreak of war, and only three have since given no cause for suspicion, and so are presumed to be ordinary, peaceable citizens. One spy sent by Steinhauer was captured in Ireland, and later shot at the Tower, another hanged himself in gaol while awaiting trial.

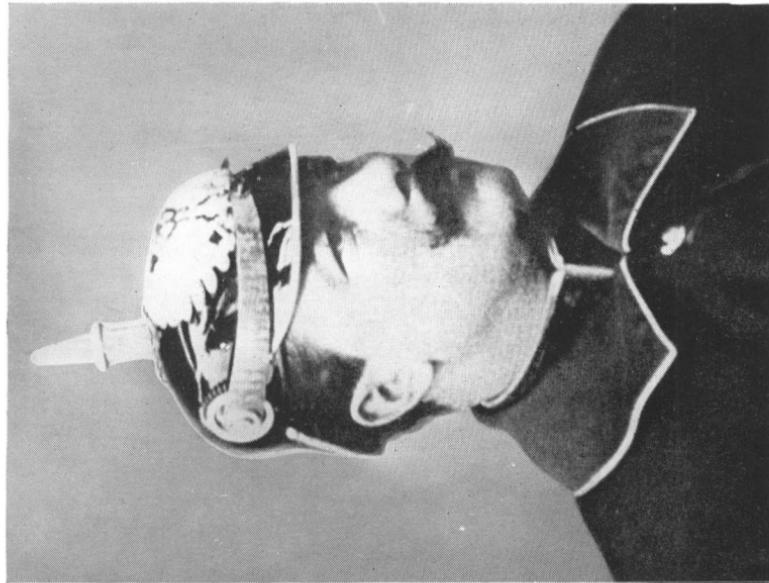
On the morning following his arrival in London, Mr. Westhaus went along to call on a friend at an alien club in Piccadilly Circus. As the club was, in its way, an exclusive one, we had no chance of discovering what Mr. Westhaus wanted to say at that interview, and so, when the friend was on his way to keep the appointment, his taxi broke down. The "fare" was a short-tempered man, and after several minutes' delay, he cursed the driver roundly, and tried to walk off to pick up another vehicle without having paid that part of his fare which was owing. The taxi-man, who corresponded singularly with the official police measurements, promptly ran him back into the taxi again, and warned him not to get out at his peril. Offers of payment were useless now, for the driver's dignity was aroused. It took fifteen minutes to put that engine right, and then the driver, in an excess of misguided haste, nearly ran down a policeman on point duty, and waited to listen to a five minutes' curtain lecture. After threading through a lot of thick traffic, a fuming German was deposited at the door of his club twenty-five minutes late for his appointment. Mr. Westhaus was gone. Perhaps it was coincidence.

On the whole, that must have been a very trying trip



HAICKE MARINUS PETRUS JANSSEN

Dutch subject. Arrested at Southampton for espionage, Court-martial Westminster Guildhall 16th July, 1915. Convicted. Shot at Tower of London 30th July, 1915.



HERR STEINHAUER

to the visitor's temper. Every time he tried to meet an acquaintance, something went wrong. His letters were delayed and misdelivered; telephones broke down at his touch or else gave innumerable wrong numbers; public clocks in buildings where their correctness was usually almost sacred were either fast or slow. His own watch, which disappeared on the first morning of his stay at the hotel, was miraculously discovered behind a dressing-table on the day he departed, and returned with profuse apologies. The joy of the thing was that the man, who was no fool, came in the end almost to suspect his own shadow; but he could prove not a single thing, and with his doubtful identity he was not really in a position to make much of a fuss. I believe that Herr Steinhauer, whose private car was waiting him at Hamburg when his ship arrived, went back to the Fatherland feeling that he had wasted his time. Since then he has been back here once more—in August 1922. He was Mr. Steiner that time, but as his power for harming us was gone, we left the clocks alone, for which, doubtless, he was thankful.

In mid-July 1914, when the war-clouds began to gather in Europe, the detectives of the Special Department went, as it were, to "action stations." I had had some experience of spy detection already, and I was given a kind of roving commission, with the East Coast as my special care. War with Germany was, of course, still only a possibility, but in police work arrangements have to be made beforehand against eventualities, or else the whole energy is wasted. I took up temporary quarters at Harwich; but before moving there definitely, I spent a week "cramming" for my new job in those rooms at Scotland Yard which are specially prepared for such purposes.

The public has an idea of the grim, square building at Westminster as being something between a police barrack

and a Government office. It is more than that. Let me explain a few details about it, and tell of some of the rooms where I spent my busy hours in those hot end-of-July days. The photographic department was the first of them. In it, indexed according to a complicated but perfectly clear system of filing, are thousands and thousands of photographs, each with a name and a few words written on the back. They are pictures of criminals who are likely to cause trouble a second time. My task then was to memorize the faces of the men—and women—who were likely to appear as German agents on our coasts.

Then I went to the library. Among its thousands of books were volumes on all sorts of crimes, records of famous criminals and great detectives, and fascinating details of notable cases of the past. The library, which is not confined to books in English or only concerning English crime, very greatly assisted me, and suggested my next two calls—to the laboratory and to the cypher room.

In the laboratory, for the first time, I learned about invisible inks. For it was of vital importance to us, in the event of hostilities, not only to be able to read enemy communications being sent out of England but also to permit certain letters from abroad to reach their destinations apparently untouched after we had satisfied ourselves of their contents. Also, as I shall tell later, there were times when we found it necessary to indite letters or portions of letters ourselves, all in the good cause.

I spent part of one day and the whole of another at the task of studying cryptograms. Cyphers have always interested me, and, as I have explained, I had already met them in my own police work over the Grosse case, but never till the days when the streets outside that room were echoing with newsboys' shouts about European

War threats did I realize what a novice I was at the game.

At the end of the time, my head was buzzing and my notebook bulging, but I had accumulated some useful knowledge, which served me well later on. I had also a clear idea that, if I needed it, I could get professional assistance by sending in any particularly difficult cyphered message to the Yard, where it would be unravelled, if human ingenuity could accomplish the job.

Finally I collected all the information available about the German spy school at Rotterdam. Mr. Peterssen, my old opponent, had been replaced in 1912 by a gentleman of the name of Flores, and this man had gathered round him three of the world's cleverest forgers. The obvious inference was that they were needed to produce faked passports, and a general notice had already been circulated to examine all passports with minute care. I made further notes concerning the paper on which passports from various countries are printed, special details about them and the probable weak points in faked photographs and hand-writing.

I also collected a number of maps of the East Coast and one or two charts showing in detail the deeps and shallows of the North Sea. Numbers of names of Germans, suspected or otherwise, living in East Coast towns and villages, were supplied to me, and I was told what arrangements to make immediately news came through of the actual outbreak of war—if such a thing ever happened. It was still the general opinion at Scotland Yard, even up to about July end, that peace would be saved at the last moment; but no detail of preparation was omitted by us on that account. When I finally boarded my train for Harwich, I felt that, internally at any rate, England was ready to defend herself against any attempted espionage or

aggression; and on the journey I went over in my mind the final details of the closing of the port of Harwich, whence it was expected that a great many not too innocent Germans would attempt to return to the Fatherland within the next few days.

CHAPTER V

The Spy round-up of 1914—The Censor; how it worked and grew—
My work in East Anglia—The man who flew carrier pigeons—
The Censor hands me my first spy news—My first brush with
the enemy.

WAR! The word echoed like a thunderclap across the breadth of England. Trains packed with moustached Regulars and goods trucks crammed with pointed shells nose-up like eggs in a basket, rumbled southward night and day; excited crowds gathered in our big towns and cheered news and rumour alike; and aliens with blonde hair and guttural accents poured towards our ports like water to a sluice, but only to discover that sleepy England had awakened.

At Harwich 138 Germans were detained and interned, most of them claiming to be innocent aliens but due for internment for all that in time of war. Three of them, at any rate, were definitely suspect from their previous activities. Meanwhile, six known spies were arrested in London, three in Newcastle, one each in Brighton, Winchester, Barrow, Southampton and Falmouth, two in Portsmouth, and five in other parts of the country. These men, it must be understood, had done nothing actually to harm us up to August 4th, but all had corresponded more or less regularly with Dierks & Co., and though that was all very well for peace time, so long as no leakage of information occurred, yet we could not risk it in time of war. Also, several of them had acted as correspondents to German newspapers, sending articles about naval and military

matters here, and these again could not be permitted too much liberty when their inquisitiveness might prove dangerous. Personally, I collected my quota of aliens from Harwich, Felixstowe and Dovercourt, and left only three known Germans at liberty in my district. One of these was a man of eighty, another a cripple of fifty-three who had been naturalized thirty years; and the last another elderly man whose son was serving with one of our shire regiments.

In those days of alarm and uncertainty, one man at least got himself into trouble through too much zeal. Late one evening, I was telephoned for to go to a hotel in Harwich where, so said the excited clerk, they had caught a spy. When I arrived the place was seething. A voluble little man was sitting in the manager's room with a couple of burly porters keeping guard. He had, it seemed, heard a well-known local journalist telephoning to London from the hotel lobby, and had promptly ordered the boots to arrest the journalist, who, he said, was the Baron von Greuning. When cross-questioned himself, he refused to speak, except to say that he lived in Glasgow. He would tell me nothing about himself, and finally I was bound to arrest him. In the court the affair had an amusing sequel. He had been to Holland on behalf of his employers and had just returned; the firm had told him not to answer questions because his visit had concerned a certain trade rivalry, so he had obeyed them to the letter when he was arrested! He was a Glasgow man and, except for asking him to give up to the court a revolver he usually carried, he got off with a warning not to refuse to answer police questions in future, and not to jump to conclusions.

Meanwhile I was working in close collaboration with the Censoring Department of the Post Office. I was asked now and again to submit suspicious letters to chemical tests for secret inks; and on three occasions I had to call on

indiscreet civilians on the East Coast and tell them that they must be very careful what they wrote to foreign correspondents concerning the movements of our troops and the despatch of munitions to France. It will be remembered that when the Germans first met our troops at Mons, they believed them to be French units, having definitely understood that the British Expeditionary Force had not then even crossed the Channel. That rumour was permitted to go through to Holland on a number of letters —about a dozen in all—while a number of better-informed letters, from people innocently unaware that they should not convey such news, were returned with an explanation to their senders.

On August 3rd, 1914, one man was made Postal Censor, in view of possible coming hostilities. There were 170 men and women in his department by the end of 1914, and just under 5,000 by the end of the War. Women were found to be definitely better than men for the work. They have a more accurate memory for details of handwriting, and are more methodical and painstaking. The packing of all parcels was prodded with needles and tested by touch, and opened and examined in cases where any suspicion was entertained. One of the cleverest messages of the whole War was written in invisible ink on the inside of some old brown paper addressed to Copenhagen, round a parcel containing two new novels. More than 130 languages and dialects were spoken and read by Censor officials and over two hundred cyphers were known to them.

Each official read an average of 120 letters a day, the total weight of correspondence dealt with each day being something like four tons, including an average of well over 2,000 parcels. Nor was the search entirely profitless, even in £ s. d. Nearly £200,000 worth of contraband material was confiscated from neutral letters for Germany; over

£8,000,000 worth of suspected share scrip was commandeered by the Government and held till the end of the War, and £2,000,000 worth definitely confiscated. Several tons weight of pro-German propaganda, some of it venomously bitter and most of it meant for India and the East, was removed and destroyed. Incidentally, although it does not come under censor work strictly, the police seized over £30,000,000 worth of German ships and cargoes as prizes.

In the first few days after the outbreak of war, I was recalled urgently to London to deal with trouble-makers there. A person calling herself an American woman journalist, and a pseudo Baron who was certainly the son of a provincial Prussian draper, had blustered into a London Government office to get permission to run a Society for Distressed Germans in England. Instead it was thought wise to add them to the distressed Germans. In 1912, they were strongly suspected of having fermented a London dock strike with foreign money; later they were said to have landed arms in Ulster, after which the lady went to a castle in South Ireland, where she posed as an Irish-born Countess, with the German as her secretary. She had at that time presented a Mauser rifle to the Volunteers of Ballysimon at a special review. Two months before the War, the sham Baron had got a quotation from London for quantities of rifles, ammunition and bayonets, and had boasted to the gunmaker that they would be wanted for an Irish revolution. The lady, meanwhile, had opened a picture palace at Croydon, which was a meeting place of discontented aliens in England. The upshot was that both she and the German were interned. In the prison camp, she had cases of champagne sent to the Commander, in order to be able to accuse him of corruption, but he returned the cases.

Our bold, bad baron broke down rather badly under

cross-examination. He stated that he was a German by birth, but had been naturalized as an American when a mere child, and had been at school in Detroit. I asked him such questions as what school he attended, where he lived, who was his schoolmaster, how far his home was from the school, and various details about his life after leaving school. On checking up his answers, I found that he had named two non-existent streets, that the school he mentioned had been built in 1908, when he himself was forty-two, and that the schoolmaster whose name he had given was fifteen years younger than my prisoner himself—was, in fact, appointed as master of that school in 1913.

Two days after my return to Harwich, I found cause for suspicion at Dovercourt. That was the third week in August; as I was returning from the Post Office, where I had been examining some letters, I saw a pigeon, flying very high, winging its way over my head, and straight out to sea. I ran back to the Post Office at the top of my speed, and telephoned to an officer in charge of certain fast coastal boats to try to shoot the bird as it left the coast. But it must have got away ahead of us, for he never even caught sight of it.

I went through the port with a small-tooth comb after that, and it was during the next afternoon that I saw another pigeon fly up from a roof I happened to be watching—for I had my suspicions—and head towards Germany. That time we did not miss it; but although the bird was a carrier right enough, it bore no message. At the same time, its departure synchronized with the exit of a destroyer flotilla from the port; the previous day a cruiser had steamed off to sea three or four minutes before the other bird left.

I went straight along to the building whence the bird had flown, and arrested the proprietor. The old man protested volubly that he did not breed carrier pigeons,

and knew nothing about them, except that they insisted on coming and sitting on the roof of his public house! When he dramatically repeated this at his trial, a helpless titter went round the court, and even the authorities smiled. The prisoner, however, who was a German by birth, was told to go away and live inland, where he would not be so easily suspected, and seemed glad enough to get off so lightly. He made over the public house to his son and daughter, and himself retired from business.

Whether he was really as innocent as he pretended, I cannot say even now. No one else in the town bred pigeons as far as we could trace, but on the other hand we could find no actual proof that they belonged to him, except that they used to sit about on his roof. In any case, we had no further trouble of the kind during the War; carriers, indeed, were hardly used at all in England for spy purposes.

At this time a definite leakage of information was occurring on the East Coast, chiefly to do with the movements of our war vessels. The first serious intimation of it was that on the morning of December 16th a number of German warships appeared off Hartlepool, Scarborough and Whitby and began a fierce bombardment. The shells killed a hundred and forty people, and wounded as many more, very largely women and children. The German ships stayed over half an hour, and then departed, exactly in time to miss the detachments of our own Fleet which had been wirelessed to return to deal with them. That raid could not have happened without the Germans actually knowing when our vessels would be absent from the East Coast (very seldom indeed was it that we left that coast so undefended), and also knowing by which route the defenders would return, for no clash took place and the raiders got home again without suffering for their temerity.

Month after month of search and examination showed

no results. But at least we made such a barrier that no more news of any dangerous sort could filter through; and through that waiting time we knew quite well that the next attempt to send Fleet information abroad would probably result in work on Tower Green. Still, we could obtain no useful clues, though we followed a good many intricate ones which ended in nothing. Finally, having tired of useless watching and waiting on the East Coast, I decided to go down to London and have a talk with the Censor officials with whom I was working.

It was a fortunate visit. Going through reams of copied correspondence and records of cables, I came on details of orders for cigars sent from various of our seaport towns. They were being sent, evidently, by two men, to an address in Holland, and judging by the orders contained in the cables those men were supplying hundreds of thousands of cigars to our tobacconists. That was a time when a good cigar cost money; and it struck me as strange that such a roaring trade should be going on. Personally, I had not noticed many Corona-Coronas being smoked.

Telephone wires began to hum, and after half a day of enquiries, I felt reasonably sure that I was on the trail of one of these singularly successful cigar travellers. A man answering his description was due to arrive at an Aldgate hotel that evening. There were certain letters used after each order for cigars that was sent to Holland, and in my mind those letters had a sinister significance. I wanted to ask my gentlemen a few questions about them, and also to sample some of the fine cigars which they so frequently ordered. I went along to Aldgate.

CHAPTER VI

Wiping out the score for Whitby and Scarborough—Janssen and Roos go to the Tower—Harwich signals the submarines.

IT was a chill spring evening when I stepped into the lounge of the Three Nuns Inn at Aldgate. Sitting at a table, sipping a whisky and talking animatedly to two merchant captains, was a fair-haired, broad-shouldered man who answered very accurately to the description I had of the cigar traveller. I sat down at a nearby table, and fragments of his conversation came to me. He was talking about the German submarines, and trying to find out indirectly when the two skippers were going to sail, and from what ports. The men were both tight-lipped R.N.R. officers, and merely gave him monosyllables, without letting out any clues whatever.

Finally, the fair-haired man got up, yawned, and came jauntily past my table, making for the door. He was humming a music-hall air, and looked singularly unlike a man over whom the shadow of the Dark Angel was already falling. "Mr. Willem Johannes Roos, I believe?" I said quietly, as he drew level with me. "I want a word with you, Mr. Roos. May I come up to your room?"

He looked at me with narrowing eyes, but with no sign of fear. Through the smoke I saw one of the R.N.R. men half rise from his table and stare at us. Roos gave a fleeting glance at the door, decided that escape was impossible, and nodded airily. "Come along up," he said, smiling. I followed him upstairs.

" You travel in cigars, I believe," I said when we had sat down in his room. " Have you any samples here? I must warn you that you are under arrest, and that anything you say may be used in evidence against you."

The man bluffed magnificently. " Under arrest! " he laughed. " I suppose you're a detective? You've made a silly mistake. I've no samples here; as a matter of fact, I've run out of stock at the moment."

" You were in Hull two days ago," I said, " and you sent an order for 20,000 Coronas. Your order bore the letters 'a.g.k.' Which shops in Hull did you call on? What firm in Holland do you represent? And what do those three letters mean? Answer those questions in order, please."

For several seconds he sat silent eyeing me. Then he said abruptly: " I shall not answer those questions. You have no right to ask me private code-signs of my firm."

" Your orders went to Dierks & Co., Rotterdam," I said. " Do they deal in cigars? "

" They do! " he snapped.

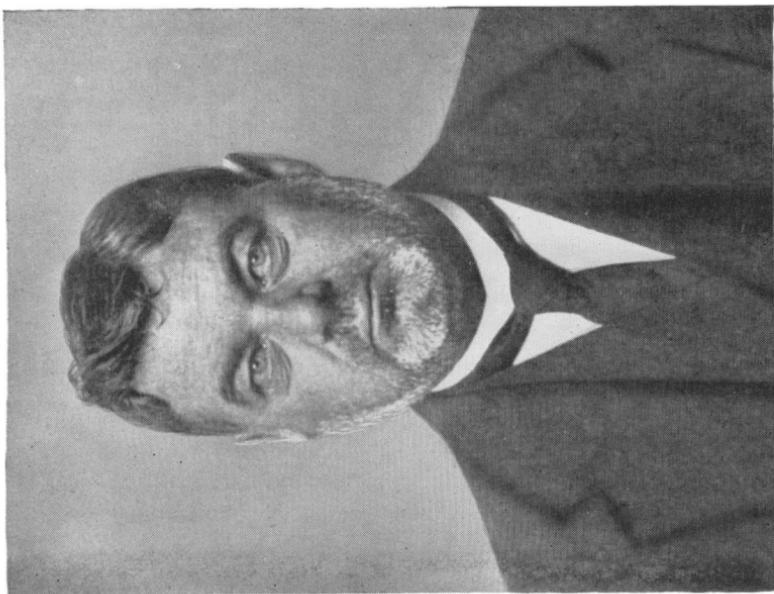
I got up and warned him that I must search the room. I also mentioned that there was a Detective-Sergeant on the landing outside, so that an attempt to escape would be useless. He started some sort of angry protest; then sat glowering at me. There were no cigars anywhere in the room and no evidence that there had ever been any. There were no orders from cigar firms, nor books in which such orders might be kept. But there was an illustrated magazine which had lists of ships pencilled in the margins, each list with the name of a Naval port beside it. The most recent entry was as follows:

" Hull. a.g.k. (and there followed a list of the names of twenty cruisers) coronas."

My knowledge of German came to my aid. "These letters stand for alter grosse Kreuzer ?" I asked sharply. The words are German for "old large cruisers." Roos looked at me in silence, but I heard his breath hiss gently between clenched teeth, and knew I was right. I referred to my notebook for a moment and found some more clues to the puzzle from my stray shot. "These other letters," I said, "u.s.b. I suppose then stands for Unter See Booten ? And k.s. means Kriegschiffe, of course—battleships ? What do Cabanas, Coronas and Rothschilds stand for ? It's only a matter of time to work it out now; why not own up ?"

Roos sat obstinately silent. I had a final look round his room and then asked him to come along with me. He asked rather awkwardly if there was any need for him to be handcuffed, and was very relieved when I offered to take his parole instead. He seemed to me a man who could, within his own limits, be trusted. Also, he was a brave man. The two captains were still sitting in the lounge when we passed through. "There you are, you suspicious old devil!" whispered one to the other in that foghorn *sotto voce* that sailors use. Roos cheerily called good night to them as we passed out. At the station I asked Roos one or two final questions, and he was a little more communicative. He said that his firm, which he now admitted was Dierks & Co., had two representatives in England; himself north of London and another man, whose name he refused to give, working in the south. He admitted that he had often met his fellow-traveller, and said that if we applied to Holland we should find all his facts in order.

Meanwhile I went along to the Yard to find out whether anything had come of certain instructions I had sent to a number of South Coast postmasters. Yes; from Southampton had come an urgent telephone message half an hour



JOSEF MARKS

German subject. Arrested at Gravesend for espionage. Sentenced 1915 to five years penal servitude. Deported to Germany 15th November, 1919.



WILLEM JOHANNES ROOS

Dutch subject. Arrested at Three Nuns Hotel, Aldgate, London, for espionage. Court-martial Westminster Guildhall 16th July, 1915. Convicted. Shot at Tower of London 30th July, 1915. Attempted suicide.

before, that a cable ordering from Dierks & Co., 3,000 cabanas a.g.k., 1,000 Rothschilds k. and 4,000 coronas u.s.b. had been handed in for despatch that evening. The message went on that the man who had handed in the cable had been shadowed to his lodgings according to my instructions, and that the cable had not been despatched. It never was despatched as a matter of fact.

To test a theory I had, I rang up Southampton and asked whether they could tell me if the report was correct that three old cruisers had just arrived in port there, one battleship had just left and four submarines were stationed there. If I had guessed the meanings of the significant letters rightly, the figures must obviously be worked out on the basis of one equalling 1,000 in the message and the rest was pure guesswork. It was nearly right, but not quite. After asking in a furious voice where the news came from, the officer reported (I having explained who I was) that the three old cruisers were stationed there; the battle-cruiser had just arrived and the four submarines had gone out that afternoon. By deduction I arrived at the fact that Cabanas meant "stationed here"; Rothschilds "arrived here"; and Coronas "left here." The name of the port was, of course, on the cable; and with the code letters I have already described, those innocent-looking cigar orders gave exact details of the movements of our war vessels. Perhaps that was how the Scarborough raid had been managed without any interference!

I went to Southampton post haste. Outside a flat-fronted brick house just inland from the docks was loitering a quiet man who nodded to me as I went by. That meant that the man who had sent off the cable that afternoon was still in the brick house. I knocked at the door, and a scared landlady let me in. It was very late, but when I was shown up to the lodger's room, he was sitting reading

a cheap novel. "Mr. Haicke Marinus Petrus Janssen," I said, and I gave him the usual warning.

This man blustered. He would have damages; he didn't intend to come with me; I could come in the morning if I wanted to see him. "Well," I said, "I must ask some questions now. You work for Dierks & Co. of Rotterdam, I believe, as one of their cigar travellers. Are there any more representatives of your firm in England?"

"I don't see why I should answer your questions," said the man loudly. "But as a matter of fact the firm has no other representatives over here. I'm the only one in England. Why?" I asked him if he had ever heard of a man called Roos. "No," he said abruptly. "I know no one of that name. Dierks have no one of that name working for them."

I took him along with me. He was furious, but did not actually resist. On the way to the station, he told me that my charge was absurd. "I am Dutch," he said obstinately. "I have served in the Dutch Merchant Service, and there I earned your Board of Trade medal for saving seamen's lives from a burning English ship. How can I be a spy?" Actually, as I discovered later, his statement about the medal was correct; he had saved several lives and shown the greatest bravery and coolness, and disregard of danger.

Roos and Janssen stood their trial at the Westminster Guildhall in July 1915. Until they were faced with one another in the court they stuck to their stories, the one that he knew the other well and the other that he was the sole representative of Dierks & Co. in England. We did not let them know that we had known all about Dierks & Co. for some considerable time, but we made enquiries in Holland just to be quite sure that it had not changed into an innocent tobacco firm after all. It had not. Janssen

had sent orders from Chatham, Portsmouth, Devonport and Southampton corresponding with the arrival and departure of our warships; Roos had cabled from Rosyth and Hull to our knowledge. The same code was used by both. Moreover, neither had ever received from Holland or sold or offered in England one single cigar. No tobacconists had been called on, and despite the "orders" for thousands of cigars from the various ports, none had ever been despatched by Dierks & Co. Two interesting exhibits I was able to produce at the trial. They were bottles of scent, the bottles and contents being identical. This scent, on analysis at the Yard, showed that it possessed the properties of invisible ink, and it was also proved in the case that neither man used scent on himself at any time. They should have used it; on such trifles as that do men's lives hang.

At the court the two men were good-humoured and philosophical. When the Court Martial ended, Roos turned to Janssen and shrugged. Even when their passports were produced and shown to be forged and on paper not like that used in Dutch passports, they had not seemed affected or afraid. That night, in his cell, Roos was heard shouting unintelligible jargon and singing. Towards morning a warder heard a crash and tinkle of glass and ran to the cell. He was only just in time. Roos had broken his window with his fist, and was engaged in trying to cut his throat with a jagged bit of glass.

He acted insanely at intervals until he was taken to the Tower for execution. The night before he was shot he was singing German drinking songs until past midnight. Early next morning Roos and Janssen were conveyed by a detachment of Military Police to a quadrangle of the Tower, and there strapped to chairs and faced by a firing party of eight men from a famous Guards regiment. They

were asked if they had any final messages or wishes, and Roos begged a cigarette, which he was given by the officer in charge.

They bared their chests themselves, but asked not to be blindfolded, and this wish was respected. The signal was given, the volley (in which no man knew whether his rifle contained a blank or a bullet) crashed out, a wisp of smoke rose, and the two spies, not ungallant in their own way, had paid the score for the East Coast naval raid of the previous December.

At about this time I had an interesting case in Harwich. A butcher's shop there which faced directly out to sea was notably careless with its lights at that time when lights at night were forbidden to be shown in seaport towns. No less than three times had the owner been warned, and said jovially that it was due to the carelessness of his sons, and that it should not happen again.

It did happen again. A Special Constable on duty near the shop noticed, one misty evening, that the blind of the front room facing the sea was being drawn up and down in a suspicious manner. Unfortunately the man could not read Morse, but there seems to be no doubt whatever that he was watching the beginning of a Morse message being flashed out seawards, perhaps to some waiting submarine. Anyway, the man knew that it was his duty to stop it, and went straight into the house. He began some explanation of his visit, but before he could say half a dozen words he was murderously attacked by the butcher, his wife, his two grown-up sons and his daughter. He managed to blow his whistle, and then one of the women hit him on the head with a lamp-stand, and he fell to the floor.

When another Special arrived he was lying trying to defend himself from kicks from the three men. There was then a fairly mixed free fight in which the two Specials used

their truncheons and fists, but were finally driven from the building. One stayed nearby to prevent further signalling while the other doubled back to report at the police station. But when he arrived the shopkeeper was there before him, in the midst of a confused story about a brutal assault which he said had been made on himself and his family because they refused to answer bullying questions from the two Specials.

In view of the many warnings, however, that story did not hold water; and besides the Specials were both quiet elderly men of known integrity who had never been known to fight anyone in their lives. Moreover, they would have been mad to take on the hefty family which had so savagely beaten them. An imprisonment sentence was passed on the shopkeeper, and his family were seriously warned not to risk any further signals seaward.

CHAPTER VII

The Philatelist who wasn't—The man who played his own funeral march—The fraulein who loved him.

DURING 1915 I came up against a number of instances which clearly showed the one glaring fault in the otherwise brilliantly organized espionage system of Germany. It was lack of precision in detail. The bogus cigar travellers I arrested had no cigars with them, and carried scent-bottles though they never used scent. Similarly, time after time, spies betrayed themselves by missing a very obvious tiny thing when they had gone to immense trouble to master every variety of more important point.

One of the difficulties which constantly presented itself to me at this time was the vast accumulation of really specialized knowledge necessary to my job. As this chapter will show, I had, among other things, to know more about stamp collecting than does the average philatelist, though that was but one of my necessary branches of study. It happened one day that I received instructions that among the fairly considerable correspondence marked "Doubtful" and put aside for further examination by the Censor, were two or three letters addressed to a private individual at The Hague. These, when I first came to examine them, seemed to be quite in order. They were letters from a keen stamp-collector to a friend who exchanged duplicates with him through the post; the actual news in them was very brief, and merely stated that the writer was well, was

travelling round England on business, and hoped soon to be back in Holland again. But each letter contained long lists of stamps wanted and offered; and it immediately occurred to me that there was a stark absence of mention of foreign stamps between about 30 cents and one dollar, or equivalent values—in fact, no figures occurred in any letter above about 25, and nearly all the figures were low digits. Suspicion breeds suspicion; and the next thing I saw was that the writer seemed to want a lot of imperforate and unwatermarked stamps. I went out to a bookshop and invested in two or three stamp-collectors' handbooks; and sat down for a spell of hard mental work. Before I had checked many of the stamps mentioned in the letter before me, I came to one that didn't exist. It was a 20-centimes, France, perfect specimen, unwatermarked, and imperforate. I could see listed several French 20-centimes stamps, but none both unwatermarked and imperforate; and it struck me as strange that the date or identifying details should not be given, since on the facts stated it might (except for the absence of watermark) have been one of three known specimens.

The letter, which was dated a couple of days earlier, said that the writer was going on to Gravesend, and would communicate again from there. I went to Gravesend, found out from the local police what strangers had come to the town recently, and after a long search discovered the man who had signed the letters—a middle-aged, spectacled fellow called Joseph Marks. I asked him if he had any objection to my examining his room, and he said that he was quite agreeable, and that he would give me any assistance possible. Meanwhile, he answered my questions candidly. He was a retired merchant, born in Holland of a South American mother and a Dutch father. He was at present trying to see England as a tourist.

"Those are my stamps," he laughed, as I asked permission to open a brown Gladstone bag on the floor. "There's nothing in there but an album and some mounts and things. Really, Inspector, I think it's hardly worth opening, but you can if you wish."

I opened it, while his voice droned on about exchanging with a friend in Holland, and being himself a keen collector. The bag contained a tin of stamp-mounts, some tweezers, a magnifying glass and a stamp album with two or three hundred varieties mounted in it. "Do you often put stamps in here?" I asked. "I suppose you're always adding to it?"

"Always," he replied pleasantly. "I exchange a great deal, and add something every day or two."

I said nothing; but the mounts in the tin were all stuck together, and had obviously not been touched for months. I noticed a pocket at the end of the book, just inside the cover, and drew out a sheet of stout paper. This is what was written on it:

Wanted—certain. Offered—uncertain.

Unused—arrived.

Used—gone.

Imperf.—undefended.

Perf.—defended.

Unwater.—no aeroplanes.

Water.—aeroplanes.

Good cond.—big.

Med. cond.—medium.

Any cond.—small.

Surcharged—submarines.

I went over and locked the door, putting the key in my pocket. "You are under arrest, Mr. Marks," I said. Then I took out from my notebook the copy I had made of

the letter. It was headed "Dover," and decoded by means of this key, it read: "Certain: 3 (cent U.S.) gone, big; defended; no aeroplanes; 5 (p. Spain) arrived small; 1 (d. English) submarine arrived. Uncertain; 20 (centimes, France) very big, no aeroplanes, undefended. Folkestone, I believe—and the letter then went on normally. By omitting the parts I have put in brackets, an interesting account was given of the defences of Dover and Folkestone, and also of the movements of our warships in the vicinity of those towns.

By means of the key we decoded further letters from Mr. Marks, which had been held up as being of a suspicious nature, and found that each list of stamps "wanted" or "offered" corresponded with movements of Naval vessels on the South Coast. Under examination Marks (who was rather a nervous type of man) broke down and confessed that he was really a spy, and also gave us certain useful information about his Dutch correspondent. By so doing he saved his life; and was given five years penal servitude for his espionage.

He was put in a cell next to another spy, with a somewhat more picturesque history. A German of the name of Buschmann, posing as a Dutch violinist, had been travelling round our Naval bases, as he himself said, seeking work. Yet he showed no lack of money, and made no apparent effort to get a job. On the other hand, he questioned anyone he thought unsuspicious, and did all he could to get information of the movements of our vessels, the departure of troopships, and the manufacture of munitions. His correspondence was watched; and one day when an innocent letter of his was being tested, rusty red letters began to form themselves between the lines. They joined and increased, and finally formed German words dealing with various matters on which it was not then politic to

send news abroad. Buschmann was arrested, his passport was discovered to be in the handwriting of Herr Flores of the German Secret Service, and he was tried and condemned to death.

When Joseph Marks was put in the cell next his, it was Buschmann's last night alive. During the night, the two men kept up a conversation between their cells, and Buschmann talked rather sadly about a love affair he had had in Prussia four years before. Marks said very little, and Buschmann evidently got the idea that he was depressed.

"I'll play to you," he shouted. "The English are very kind. They won't mind." And he picked up his violin, which, by his special request, had been put in his cell with him, and played throughout the rest of the night old German love songs, dance tunes, and some of the music from Handel's oratorios. Next morning, he was shot; his courage stayed with him to the last, and he refused to have his eyes bandaged before the volley.

In November 1919, when Marks had finished his sentence, he was deported. On leaving prison, he was met by a woman of about thirty, tall, slender and beautiful. She was the girl whom Buschmann had loved in Prussia, and she had come to hear her friend's last messages, which he had given Marks on the night before his death. Since then, she and Marks had corresponded. When I went with him from Charing Cross Station to see him out of England, that lady came to say good-bye to him, and she was crying bitterly at the breaking of this last link with her former lover. Marks went aboard the *Weimar* at Dundee in mid-November of that year, and that was the last England saw of him.

CHAPTER VIII

Hahn and Muller are gathered in—I am promised the Iron Cross; a bitter failure—The plans I sold to Germany—Mr. Roggen is interested in torpedoes.

AMONG my batch of letters for examination I found one, during the summer of 1915, that puzzled me. It was a nice, kind, sensible family letter, written in an educated hand and phrased with that mixture of care and ease which marks the intelligent man. And yet—and the more I looked at it, the more I wondered—across the bottom of the sheet beneath the signature was a double row of crosses which could only be supposed to represent kisses. In the abstract, I have no objection to kisses; but one does not expect to find them so lavishly displayed on a letter written by a mature and educated correspondent.

A hot iron passed rapidly over the sheet left it as innocent as before. We got to work with our testing chemicals. It was a delicate job to apply them without causing them to smudge the words written in genuine ink, but after some artistic brush-work, the almost-expected rusty letters began to show, and then to creep together into words. The innocence passed away with a rush! There were figures about troops, about troop-ship sailings, and a sentence which paid a grudging but emphatic tribute to the way in which British military and civil morale was weathering under the stress of war. The letter was signed with the initial “G.,” but bore no address of departure. It was, however, postmarked in a London East End district.

We enquired at the Dutch shop to which the letter was addressed, but could only learn that it was an accommodation address, and that the man who collected the letters in question seemed an ordinary business man. Meanwhile, another letter had been stopped by the Censor, again signed "G.," and again bearing rather too many kisses; and it contained a fierce demand for more money written between the lines in invisible ink. The kisses, by the way, seemed to be nothing to do with the secret information, which was all conveyed in invisible writing; they were added merely to give a homely touch to the letter! A third letter from the Censor gave me the long-sought clue. It was unsigned, and in a different handwriting; but in those accusing red letters it said—"G. gone to Newcastle, so am writing from 201 instead."

After telephoning some instructions to Newcastle, I picked up a London Post Office Directory. It was a chance, of course; but it occurred to me that 201 was possibly a house number in a street. And not many streets in the East End could be so long that there were 201 houses in them! I marked on a piece of paper the names of all those which filled the specification, and then went along in a fast car to try some of them. At each one I made certain enquiries, and in one or two cases I had a look at lodgers' rooms. The sixth house I tried was the right one. It belonged to a baker named Hahn, and he was full of bluster when I said I must search the rooms above the shop.

That, however, was soon settled. Leaving him in charge of a Detective-Sergeant, I went up and had a look at his bedroom. The first thing I saw was a cheap writing-pad on a small table. I tore off a sheet and held it up to the light. The watermark, as I expected, was the same as that on the censored letters in my possession. Beside it lay a half-used packet of envelopes exactly similar to those



LIZZIE EMILE WERTHEIM

German subject. Arrested at Regent's Park Road, London, for espionage. Sentenced at Old Bailey, 29th September, 1915, to ten years penal servitude. Died insane, Aylesbury Prison, August 1920.



ALFREDO AUGUSTO ROGGEN

German Uruguayan. Arrested at Loch Lomond, Scotland, for espionage. Court-martial Westminster Guildhall 20th August, 1915. Convicted. Shot at Tower of London 17th September, 1915.

used in the letters to Holland, and beneath them was a sheet of blotting paper. I took it over to the glass in the corner of the room. In the glass I could read on the image of the pink paper several words, including "—ne to —ewcastle so — —ting from 201 —." In a medicine chest on the wall was a steel pen with its nib uninked but corroded as if by an alkali. On the bed was a sock, not worn, but with its top faintly faded. I tested it with a drop of litmus from a bottle in my pocket, and the reaction showed an alkaline solution impregnated in the top of the sock. That solution, as was afterwards proved, was a secret ink; when it was needed, the sock was soaked in water, and the water (having thus been vitalized with the alkali) was then able to be used for writing the invisible words between the lines of the letters for Holland. I also found the fellow to the sock I had discovered, and three ties similarly treated.

Now, of course, we had ample evidence to convict Mr. Hahn; but we were still not much nearer to the identity of the mysterious "G." Our prisoner himself was obstinately silent, and sullenly denied ownership of the materials I had found in his room. As to correspondence with Holland or the personality of "G.," he repeated that he knew nothing. His neighbours, however, had less reluctance in helping us. Several of them described in detail a tall, dark, gentlemanly Russian who lived, they believed, somewhere near Russell Square, and who visited Hahn fairly frequently. Away I went in my car to Russell Square.

It was a tedious job; but, there being no alternative, I searched every boarding-house and hotel register in Russell Square for the name of a guest who had recently gone to Newcastle on business. As I had my man's description, I narrowed down my choice to one of two possible names, and drove off through the pitch-black night to Newcastle at a pace which equalled that of a fast train.

And there, in a house by the waterside, I came on my "Russian." He denied everything with a shade too much readiness; he even denied all knowledge of Hahn!

Various neighbours of the baker identified this latest capture as Hahn's visitor when, in the fullness of time, we prepared our case against him. As, one by one, the accusing facts piled up, the man lost his nerve. Finally, he sent for me and in a broken voice admitted that he was a spy, and that his real name was Muller. He had been the moving spirit of the two, and sentence of death was passed on him, while Hahn, a more or less passive accomplice, got five years penal servitude. Muller recovered his nerve after boldly declaring his profession, and was said to have shaken hands all round with the execution party before the fatal volley was fired.

No suspicion had meanwhile been aroused in Holland, and it occurred to me that a little confusion might be caused by carrying on a correspondence in the name of the ex-spies, letting the enemy know just those things which it was expedient he should know because they were so very misleading! I went with my plan to certain military authorities, and received their blessing upon it, with some suggestions as to tit-bits of faked news which, though they were offered without a smile, convulsed me. There were also proposals of a more serious nature.

Acting in concert with the military advisers, I sent certain letters in a workmanlike imitation of the handwriting of the spies, and I inserted the usual desperate pleas for payment for such invaluable secrets. Money was actually sent in return, much to our joy, and it was thought fit to absorb it into the supplies which paid for our anti-espionage work at the time.

At about this time we had news of a somewhat suspicious individual who was wandering about in the neighbourhood

of Loch Lomond. A day or two before leaving for the North he had called on a famous Midland firm of machinery makers and asked various details and prices concerning some agricultural machinery which he said he wanted to import to South America. He explained that he was a Uruguayan farmer owning vast tracts of undeveloped land which he wanted to improve and cultivate on modern lines. By a lucky coincidence, the firm's South American traveller happened at the moment to be over here on a visit; and it was considered a good business move to introduce him to the prospective customer. The traveller asked a few questions about the Uruguayan farm and the sort of machinery required there—and discovered that his vis-à-vis knew nothing whatever of the place supposed to be his home, and spoke of places hundreds of miles apart as if they were within a day's ride on horseback. He did not even know the name of his country's chief port!

Without alarming the man in any way the firm communicated with the police, and a detective was told off to watch Mr. Roggen and discover whether his movements were at all suspicious. As he immediately afterwards went to Luss on Loch Lomond, the detective communicated with the Yard; for at that time secret tests were being made on the Loch with a new British torpedo. While being shadowed, he spent two days on the moors above the Loch, hiding in the heather and watching the tests through powerful field-glasses. Then he posted a letter to a Norwegian address, saying that he was shortly leaving this country and returning to Uruguay, and that he had made a good deal in horses in Scotland. He had made no deal in horses; and between the lines of his letter was certain information which should not have been there. I arrested him and took him down to London. When I went into the room of the inn in which he was staying, he whipped

out a gun and tried to put it to his head, but I caught his wrist before he could do so.

He was tried at the Westminster Guildhall in August 1915. He was jaunty and defiant; flatly denied everything that we said about him, and finally, when proof after proof of his guilt was exposed, said that his citizenship of Uruguay protected him from suffering anything more than a slight imprisonment. He was sentenced to be shot as a spy. When sentence was pronounced, he stared incredulously around him, and then broke into threats and entreaties. He swore that he was really a Uruguayan, and that his "murder" as he called it would bring Uruguay into the War on the side of Germany. He hinted that he was related to powerful persons in that country, and shouted that they would avenge his death on his judges. A few days later, his threats were dispersed for ever in a few wisps of pale smoke at the Tower.

CHAPTER IX

I meet some Women Spies—The lady who went to Scotland by car—
Mrs. Doctor Smith and her fishpond—I cross another trail.

JUDGING from those women spies of Germany with whom I came into contact, and from those whose stories I heard from the detectives who had arrested them, I did not form a very high opinion of women as spies. A man can pretend to belong to various suitable professions to account for the fact of his moving about the country and making suspicious enquiries; a woman has no such easily-fitting cloak. Prostitutes are sometimes (very rarely) employed for espionage; quantities of information are offered by them in war-time—at a price—but such information is very seldom bought, for it cannot be counted as reliable.

In the autumn of 1915 I received news that a lady visitor at Rosyth was possessed of a powerful car, and could handle it exceedingly well. That in itself was unusual though not suspicious; but when it was added to the facts that she seemed anxious to scrape up an acquaintance with young Naval officers and that periodically she scorched down to London in her car and was back in Rosyth after three days spent almost entirely on the road, everything did not look quite so innocent as we would have liked. I went up to Rosyth.

On the day I arrived a young officer reported with some slight embarrassment that a Dutch lady had made his acquaintance the previous afternoon, asking him to help

her with her car (which had broken down), and using the opportunity to ask him a great many questions about his ship, British naval movements and details of the boom across the harbour mouth. He had given no information, but thought it wiser to report the incident. The description of the lady was that of Lizzie Wertheim, the owner of the big car; and two days earlier the local police reported that they had received a similar statement from a destroyer lieutenant.

My own observations soon proved that this charming young woman was ready to go to considerable lengths to get the news she wanted of our Fleet movements. Fashionably dressed, tall, slender and handsome, she lodged at a local hotel, was friendly with everybody, tipped handsomely and especially tried to get acquainted with Naval officers. She was, according to her own report, a Dutch lady of private means, over here on holiday and anxious to see something of England in war-time. Occasionally, she said quite openly, she had to run down to London to see her solicitor about her financial allowance, which she could only draw in person.

One morning the big car glided out of its garage, and set off southwards. I followed, at a discreet distance, in a racing car, and sent ahead of me by telephone a description of the powerful vehicle I was chasing. Roads in those days were bumpy, narrow, ill-posted and inches deep in white dust. I reckoned myself a good driver, but my race to London that day was a thrilling bit of motoring, and it was absolutely all I could do to make the pace. However my luck held and in the autumn evening I raced into London, still faithfully following my leader.

She put up her car at a garage in Bloomsbury, and went straight along to a Bedford Square hotel. I followed, and found her in due course dining with a fair-haired, weak-

mouthing man of about thirty-five, and talking earnestly to him. I engaged a table near them; unfortunately not near enough to be able to overhear their conversation. But I fixed the man's appearance in my mind, and, by sending out a note to a detective-sergeant in the lounge, found that the man's name was signed in the hotel books as R. Rowland, American citizen, and that he had been staying there about a month. I also gave instructions that his correspondence was to be specially examined and submitted to me.

After an expensive dinner, during which the two argued some question excitedly, they got up and went out to a theatre. Lizzie Wertheim stayed that night in London—apparently their argument had been whether she should return to Scotland at once or stay for a time in the south—and next morning they were riding a couple of very smart hired horses in the Row. The lady, who rode as well as she drove, was in the gayest spirits, and laughed and joked the whole time, but Mr. Rowland looked worried and unhappy. Neither of them guessed that the man on the quiet grey who passed and repassed them was a detective officer—was, in fact, myself.

On the following morning Mrs. Wertheim got into her long superb car and went north again, myself still on her trail, though this time a little further behind, so as not to arouse suspicion. I arrived in Rosyth an hour after her car had been put away. That evening from some source unknown to us, she got information that the battleship *Tiger* was due to leave Scapa Flow. And from the first collection next morning the Censor collected a letter in her handwriting, saying that the writer had had a safe journey up to Scotland, was getting tired of Rosyth, and would soon be moving northwards. It was tested for invisible writing. Between the lines appeared the information we

had expected—which should certainly not have been there.

Immediately I telephoned to London not to let Rowland (to whom the letter was addressed) out of sight; and I went to the Rosyth hotel to arrest Mrs. Wertheim. She had paid her bill and gone that morning back to London. Probably the receipt of some fresh and important news had made her change her plans; anyway, I went to London after her as fast as I could drive. I had made arrangements for the movements of her big car to be noted, and as I sped south I checked that it had passed all the way before me. I found it eventually at the same garage in London as before.

As we wanted to get more information against Rowland, we left Mrs. Wertheim free for one more night. She dined with Rowland as before, and we watched his movements and correspondence for anything that might be suspicious. Next morning, when Mrs. Wertheim was walking in Regent's Park Road with three lady friends, I warned her that she was under arrest, and must come at once to the Yard to answer questions concerning her actions. Her bravado was magnificent. She stared haughtily at me, said that she was busy, but was willing to oblige us by coming later, and that under no circumstances would she accompany me there and then. As I did not want the task of chasing her car all over England, I was obliged to call assistance, and take her away in a taxi at once.

She consistently denied everything, but facts were against her. She was shown her own letter with the forbidden news, and merely said we had forged it! She was told just how her movements had been traced, and merely made acid remarks about what she chose to call our "comedy of errors." The smart feather in her hat was found to be impregnated with concentrated invisible ink. Evidence

was brought that she had tried to obtain information from officers at Rosyth. She was committed for trial.

How I dealt with Rowland, it will be simpler to tell in my next chapter. Here I propose to recount my adventures with other women spies, and the various ways in which German women attempted to serve their country by spying.

Mrs. Doctor Smith was an interesting example of a woman spy with ideals. A German, married before the War to an English doctor, when the War broke out she was the mother of a boy of seven, and seemed thoroughly domesticated and happy. But always she had cherished a burning patriotism. Her husband was dead, and she was free to attempt to help her country in what she thought to be its hour of need. She wrote letters to a Dutch friend—the manager of Dierks & Co., fruit merchants—in which she said that the birds were endangering the pike in the pond of a London park, and that the attempt to keep down the carp by introducing the pike was a failure. Under cross-examination, she was unable to keep up the pretence. Pike meant submarines; carp meant merchantmen, and birds were Allied aeroplanes. The submarine campaign, in other words, was in her opinion a failure. We usually let that sort of letter go through with one or two discreet additions; but we took precautions to prevent Mrs. Smith getting herself into any further trouble.

Eva de Bournanville was a French Swede, and called herself an actress. She was arrested for attempting to send military information to Stockholm by writing it in invisible ink between the lines of a family letter. The news she was sending was of vital interest, and she seemed to have some dangerous power of collecting it. She was condemned to hang, but the sentence was commuted to penal servitude for life. Her spirits were not dashed, however, and she wrote from prison asking specially that her evening frocks

might be saved for her till she should want them again, and giving detailed instructions on how to wrap them.

Madame Popovitch in Malta sent cypher telegrams of steamer sailings and arrivals from the island, to an agent in Spain, who was said to have passed them on to submarines. In this connection I was told an amusing story by an Intelligence Officer who was serving in Malta at the time. The island is always a hot place, and our troops there suffered somewhat from "drought." On one occasion they had run absolutely out of beer, and on a sweltering morning some hundreds of them lined the harbour ready to give a rousing cheer to the ship which was due to arrive with a drinkable cargo. But Madame Popovitch had sent a telegram about that ship, and while the vessel was waiting outside the harbour for the boom to be swung aside, a torpedo sank her under the soldiers' very eyes! Never, said my friend, had he heard such language as resulted when the men saw that cargo wasted and realized that they would have to drink undiluted water for another week. This lady's code was found in a tattered dictionary in which certain words had alternative secret meanings written beside them. She was not young nor beautiful, but portly and voluble. When she was questioned she looked round for something to throw at her examiners, and failing that, shouted them down. She was subsequently proved insane, though her telegrams were sane and dangerous enough.

A little later in the year, a girl travelling to Madrid with an old duenna was arrested in England. She had a suspicious amount of luggage—seventeen trunks—and her passport was more than doubtful. When the trunks were examined, one of them contained a number of notebooks and papers, and also nine Iron Crosses! The duenna, fearing for her own skin, turned King's Evidence and said that the girl

was a relation of a German diplomatic official in Spain, and that she was on her way to him with information she had obtained in England. Both women were imprisoned, and two neutral powers asked for their release, but without effect.

CHAPTER X

Mr. Rowland goes to the Tower—Blindfolded with his lover's handkerchief—The tragic story of Sir Roger Casement.

THE first thing that the Postal authorities handed to me from Mr. Rowland was a London evening newspaper. It looked an innocent parcel, fastened in a news wrapper, and without any writing apparent on it at all. I tested it, however; and in the blank stop-press column came up a message written in German. One thing Mr. Rowland had forgotten when he addressed that newspaper which alone would have betrayed the communication as a suspicious one; he had begun with the name of the country, then written the town, and ended with the name of the person to whom the paper was addressed. Americans don't address letters in that fashion, but Germans always do!

Then came a four-page letter. That also looked innocent enough until we heated it, and then the invisible writing began to show. Newspaper and letters were all signed "George T. Parker," evidently so that, should their contents be discovered, their authorship would be harder to bring home on Rowland himself. The letter finally proved his guilt, and I went along to his hotel to ask him to come with me to the Yard.

I asked him to let me see his passport first of all. He produced it, saying in his nasal voice that I would find it in order and that he would be glad to have my apologies. Superficially, it looked natural enough; under my pocket

magnifying glass I noticed that the American eagle on it had one claw inverted and had three too few feathers in the tail. The paper looked to me (and was afterwards proved to be) of the wrong texture and size for a genuine American passport. The seal was shown by chemical tests to be made of a wax giving wrong acid tests for an American seal. I asked my man if I could look round his room, though I said nothing immediately about the errors in the passport. He stared at me, went rather white, sat down and nodded. He was not a strong type, and his nerves had already started to go to bits.

In his bag were two bottles about whose contents I had some questions to ask. One smelt strongly of lemons, and was a plain white glass bottle containing a colourless liquid. The other, which was labelled "Hair Tonic" in a small, neat hand on white paper, contained a yellow, mobile liquid. I asked what kind of hair tonic it was, and Rowland gulped a little and said that he did not know, but that it had been given him by a chemist in America. I put the two bottles in my pocket. Later, in the laboratory, the first was proved to contain a mixture of formalin and lemon-juice, which was the liquid used in writing the hidden messages on the newspaper and on the letter in our possession; the "hair tonic" was another invisible ink preparation which would only answer to chemical tests, whereas the first would become visible by passing a hot iron over the paper on which it was used.

On a bureau in the bedroom lay a number of sheets of smooth writing paper, suitable for use with these "inks," and exactly similar in watermark and texture to the ones on which the letter in our possession had been written. There, too, was a pen with its nib discoloured with a brown stain, but not marked with ink. In a writing case were three letters from Mrs. Wertheim, giving information from

Rosyth and arranging meetings with him so that he could take other information and pass it on to Germany and elsewhere.

Finally, I told Rowland that he was under arrest, and must come with me. The man broke down pitifully. He began with threats, saying that I was interfering with the rights of an American citizen. I explained to him that his passport was faulty, and that we had stopped some of his letters with information secretly conveyed between the lines. His mouth opened and shut; suddenly he screamed in a high, broken voice for mercy. I tried to quiet him, and explained that he would be given every chance to prove himself innocent at his trial.

His bravado had now gone altogether, and he started to babble. At first, his statements were so mixed that they were not understandable; afterwards he quietened, and I got a scrappy account of his adventures. He had been taught in a German spy school at Antwerp, and shown how to write with invisible inks, taught secret signs and codes (which he demonstrated to me with indecent haste), and given other spies' addresses. These, to his credit, he would not disclose. He had been told to get into touch with Mrs. Wertheim, and work with her, acting chiefly as an agent for redirecting the news she could obtain. He said with sobs that he had fallen in love with her on sight, and that she had used all her undoubted fascination to make him spend on her pleasures all the money he received for spying. He said that he was at that moment in debt to the hotel he lived in, and that his partner saw to it that when any fresh amounts of money came, she obtained them directly or else made him spend them on her. She had even, he said, threatened to expose him to the police, and to tell his employers that he was a traitor to them.

His American twang he had learned in Antwerp; he



FRANK L. T. GREITE

American citizen by naturalization. Arrested at Cambridge Street, London, W. 2, for espionage. Sentenced to ten years penal servitude 19th August, 1916.



REGINALD ROWLAND ALIAS GEORGE BRECKOW

German subject, with forged American passport. Arrested at Ivanhoe Hotel, Bloomsbury, London, for espionage. Sentenced to death at Old Bailey 29th September, 1915. Shot at Tower of London 26th October, 1915.

was in reality the son of a quiet old man who strung pianos and lived in Stettin in Germany. He had fallen among bad companions and been forced to spend above his income; had falsified the books of a German bank, and had been saved from imprisonment by offering to serve as a spy. He asked me if I could prevent his real name from being made public at his trial, and seemed overcome with tearful gratitude when I offered to try to do so. It would, he said, perhaps kill the old man in Stettin, who believed his son to be serving honourably in the army in Flanders. His name was not divulged, and the piano-maker was left to dream his dreams in peace. Rowlands said that his passport had been faked from a photographic plate, and that most of the spies who came to England had their passports similarly prepared by Flores, the head of the school in Antwerp—apparently my old friend of Rotterdam.

Rowland and Mrs. Wertheim were tried together at the Old Bailey in the autumn of 1915. The woman was given ten years penal servitude, only escaping capital punishment because there was a prejudice against executing women. Rowland, rather to my surprise, was sentenced to be shot at the Tower. He had regained some of his dignity, but he was still a pitiful spectacle, and he almost broke down on hearing sentence passed. At the Tower, when he came to face the firing party, he requested in a broken voice that he might be blindfolded with his lover's handkerchief, and produced from his pocket a tiny scrap of perfumed cambric with the initials "L.W." embroidered in coloured silk in one corner. The thing was far too short to go round his head, but the officer in charge of the firing party tied it inside a bigger handkerchief, next his eyes. It seemed to comfort him, yet it is to be doubted whether his accomplice was worth so much devotion. She was selfish, hysterical and untrustworthy to an extreme degree.

She did not survive her sentence, but died at Broadmoor Asylum in 1921.

Early in 1916 another form of trouble presented itself to those responsible for keeping the peace within our borders. Word was received that Sir Roger Casement had attempted to effect a landing in Ireland, with German arms and a sprinkling of German troops. To realize the power of that menace, it is necessary to go back a little in history. At the time of the outbreak of war Ireland was seething with rebellious anger, rifles in great quantities were everywhere displayed, and the Home Rule Bill had broken down in Parliament. With typical Irish spirit, the population decided on August 4th to suspend hostilities for the period of the War, and the dash and courage of Irish troops in that struggle is too well known to need any reference here. But meanwhile German propaganda and German agents had been busy in a country which it is almost impossible effectively to police. Touch was maintained with Germany through Irish-American channels. The Irish Citizen Army and the Irish Volunteers agreed, with very great reluctance, to effect an armed rising in Spring 1916, if an Irishman of repute would lead them and if the chances looked hopeful.

Sir Roger Casement, dreamer, poet and adventurer, had got to Germany in 1914. His life was spent praying for an opportunity to make a united Ireland free of what he sincerely believed to be "the English yoke." During 1915 he interviewed a number of Irish soldiers in German prison camps, trying to persuade them to join with him in a fantastic endeavour to "liberate" Ireland. He saw over a hundred men, and convinced only six or seven. Three or four times during the year the Germans promised him arms and a vessel to take him back to his country, but each time the effort was postponed.

Finally, Casement would wait no longer, and accept no

more promises. He said he would go to America if the needed help was not forthcoming. Reluctantly, the Germans (who needed all the arms they had for their own use) loaded a tramp steamer, the *Auk*, with 1,200 tons of rifles and ammunition and a dozen machine-guns, under a light layer of timber, and put Casement himself aboard a submarine. This was at the time that conscription for Ireland was first mooted, and the intention was to use that suggestion as a lever with which to raise the flag of rebellion in Ireland.

The submarine commander, when Casement came aboard, commented on the scantiness of his luggage and asked whether he would need anything else. "Only my shroud," was the reply. Off Ireland Casement and his two followers got into a canvas collapsible boat, and tried to row inshore, while the submarine rapidly sank beneath the waves to avoid the look-out of patrol boats. The boat was smashed as she ran inshore, and all three men were miserably soaked. The two ex-soldiers went off to try to discover something of the spirit of the neighbourhood while Casement rested on the beach.

Meanwhile, the *Auk* had succeeded in running the Naval blockade and had loomed up in a sea mist off the Irish coast at the prearranged spot. But no Irish Volunteers awaited her landing. Instead, a British patrol boat came hurrying towards her, and fired a shot across her bows. The skipper of the *Auk* ran up the German flag, and, realizing that his mission had failed, and not wishing his cargo to fall into British hands, courageously blew up his vessel before she could be boarded. Casement and his friends having been arrested by police, he was himself escorted to England for trial. I saw him in the court, a man whose whole life had been ruined by frustrated hopes for his country, a pale-faced dreamer who said that he had

always had a foreshadowing of such an end. He was truly a great patriot, and he had been misled by men more unscrupulous and plausible than himself. He ended his unhappy life at the hands of the hangman at Pentonville. Even his enemies were forced to admire the man's sincerity, but at that time he was too dangerous to us to be left alive.

Meanwhile the proposed Irish Rebellion had petered out. Rebels seized various strategic points in Dublin, but the heart of the people was against them, and they were isolated and overpowered. Fifteen leaders of the rising were executed, and some 3,000 Irishmen who had taken part in it were interned in England for a few months.

CHAPTER XI

The Tragedy of Lord Kitchener—Spies who claimed the toll of the *Hampshire*—Frank Greite is caught—The Indian Plots.

HOW many German spies claimed that they had supplied the information that led to the torpedoing of the *Hampshire*? One man who published his memoirs in Germany a month or so ago said that he lived in England throughout most of 1916, undetected by the police, and that he escaped to Holland after sending a number of important signals to submarines from a lonely part of the Yorkshire coast, one of which signals he claimed described the date of departure and route of the vessel which foundered, sinking Russia's last hopes. And one other man, Heinz Hickman, made a statement that seems to me to be of more value in deciding the question than any other evidence we have. He was an engineer on the U22, the submarine which sank the *Hampshire*. When he lay dying in a Philadelphia hospital, he solemnly swore that his ship received a wireless from Germany saying that spies in London had communicated that Lord Kitchener would be aboard the *Hampshire* and had given her sailing date and route, and that the captain of the U22 was decorated with the Iron Cross for intentionally selecting that ship as his victim.

So much for statements. My own certain knowledge of the matter is not great. A Detective-Sergeant of the Special Department, a man called MacLaughlin, whom I knew quite well and who was Kitchener's personal attendant,

went aboard the vessel with the great soldier, and I know that not even MacLaughlin himself knew the time the boat would sail. In fact, I believe it depended on Kitchener's work in London, and was not settled until the Field-Marshal stepped on board. I am confident in saying that, beyond one or two personal friends of the soldier, no one could have known exactly when the *Hampshire* would leave for Russia. That she was bound for Russia was, however, more or less of an open secret in official circles, and might perhaps have been discovered by a very clever spy. How such a person could have got the news to Germany is beyond my imagination. Not, I believe, through any postal or telephonic method; the only supposition is through signalling from the coast. That was how, in after years, one ex-spy of my earlier acquaintance said that he had done it; but his word was not reliable at the best of times, and I very much doubt whether it was more than an empty boast on his part. At any rate, I can dispel the rumours that the way the news leaked out was ever discovered, and that the survivors of the *Hampshire* were sworn to secrecy. No one has ever discovered the exact causes which resulted in this grim tragedy of the sea.

Immediately after the tragedy had echoed with such sickening effect through the Allied countries, I arrested one proven spy in London. This man was Frank L. Greite, and he gave himself away in a curious manner. A letter was posted in a South Coast town, addressed to Sweden, and with no signature or address of departure. Between the lines of that letter were several statements concerning the sailing of steamers from England.

I went through the aliens' list in the town where the letter was posted, and got the address of a man who had formerly lived in Manchester. But by that time he was no longer on the coast; he had gone to London to try to

discover facts about the shipping to and from there. I traced him to a lodging in Edgware Road and he was in when I called. Asked what his trade was, he said he was an American newspaper correspondent, over in England to send war news to his paper. He named as his employer the proprietor of a famous New York syndicate. I asked him what a forme was like, and he could not tell me. I asked him various questions about the way in which he sent his stories, which he said went by cable, and he made gross errors in his answers—obviously he had never sent a cable to New York in his life. Finally, I found the usual invisible ink saturated into the material of his tie.

When I said he must come to the Yard he attacked me with a small sandbag which he drew from his pocket. But I was ready for that, and was able to disarm him and take him along with me without much trouble, though he was an athletic and vigorous man. He was duly tried and convicted, and proved to be a German who had naturalized as an American citizen. His sentence was ten years penal servitude.

At the time that these things were going on at home, German agents were no less busy abroad, and our police and Intelligence officials in India particularly had their hands full. One of the most interesting ventures of the War was neatly foiled by an Intelligence officer from whom I afterwards had the story of his adventures, and I do not think they will be out of place here as a comparison of Secret Service work abroad with our own work at home.

In the bazaars of Calcutta my friend heard whispers that liberation had been promised to India, and that it was now very near. More to the point, certain rich merchants came to him with a story that Calcutta was to be seized and sacked in what promised to be somewhat of a repetition of the Mutiny. His own native agents, on

seeking, came across an alarming story. German officers had been promised, immense quantities of arms were said to be on their way to India, a disaffected hill tribe in the north had recently been using in hunting modern Mauser rifles, and known agitators had been moving through the villages preaching a *Jehad* against British tyranny.

Before long, and by the accident of one of his men overhearing a conversation when he woke in the night in a native lodging-house where he was sleeping, this officer added some vital parts to the puzzle. German arms had been promised from California, Germans in America had promised to come and drill the hill tribes in a looting rush down into Calcutta, money was promised with which to buy over dozens of those little chieftains who exist along the frontier line and who will wage war on their best friends for a mercenary's wages and a chance of plunder. Calcutta was a prize which must have seemed a very promise of Paradise to them, with its great warehouses and millionaire native merchants.

The German steamer *Maverick* actually left San Pedro with 30,000 rifles aboard, 400 rounds for each, two lakhs of rupees (about £10,000) and a number of Germans as passengers. Simultaneously, the German Consul in Siam despatched a vessel carrying 5,000 rifles, thousands of rounds of ammunition, and one lakh of rupees. We could have prevented the sailing of these ships, but, as the Bengal Government had had time to get matters nicely into order, it was thought wiser to let them get into the Indian Ocean, when they discovered one morning long grey shapes bearing down on them. The battleships drew abreast, put prize crews aboard, and convoyed those useful arms and that helpful money to a port where they could serve the Allies. From Shanghai a few days later, two other ships sailed, all unsuspecting, carrying big cargoes

of rifles, machine-guns, explosives and money. They were duly collected and shepherded to suitable destinations.

In Bengal itself, the plotters, unaware of the failure of the attempts to supply them with the sinews of war, held a midnight gathering to address (and impress) a certain wavering native princeling who was almost persuaded to join them. Into his palace in the midst of the conclave marched a dust-flecked English Colonel, his aide, and half a dozen native officers. With Eastern fatality, the palace guards did not attempt to resist their entry. In the room the plotters moved menacingly towards the newcomers, hands on knives. The Colonel told them to look from the window before they committed themselves further. The moonlit courtyard outside was full of mounted troops, sitting silent. The plotters surrendered and the German hopes of a new Mutiny were dispelled for ever.

A persistent people, however, our enemies of that day. A very short while after this Mutiny plot had failed among the Hindus, they had a try to inflame the Mohammedans into rebellion. Certain letters, written on yellow silk and signed by a number of really unimportant agitators who claimed to represent Mohammedan India, were sent to the Tsar of Russia, asking him to abandon his alliance with England, and offering him India as a price. Indian Mohammedans, said the letters, would rise to support even a small Russian army coming down through the Afghan passes; and the Afghan tribes were, according to this specious missive, being approached for their support.

Actually, the fantastic story in no way represented the feelings of the vast majority of Mohammedans in India, who have always been most loyal to this country. The Afghans themselves are Mohammedans, and when the emissaries of the plotters approached them, they found a reception so unpleasant that not all of them won back safely

to India again. A man called Maulvi Obeidulla, previously trained as a Maulvi (a kind of teacher-priest) in a Mohammedan school, had earlier received a declaration of a *Jehad*, or Holy War of the Crescent, from a Turkish official named Ghalib Pasha, who also promised Turkish Mohammedan help to any rising in India. Assisting him was an Indian of the name of Mahendra Pratap, who declared himself the King of India, and said he was descended from the old Moghul Kings. These people sent their silk letters on a gold plate to the Tsar.

The details of the story sound as fantastic as the Arabian Nights Entertainments, or a children's Eastern fable, but the plot had the official support of the Count von Zimmerman, one of the most famous German diplomats of the war years. However, it all ended in a few arrests (Ghalib Pasha was captured among the rest), while the self-styled King of India had to flee for his life. India's loyal Mohammedans were furious at the things which had been promised in the name of their religion, and publicly approved the breaking up of the plot. It sounds foolish on paper, but at the time men who knew thoroughly the temperamental nature of the Indian masses, ready to be swayed to any absurdity by a mere slogan or rumour, said that the destruction of the Silk Letters Plot, as it was called, was worth to us more than a victorious pitched battle on the Western Front.

CHAPTER XII

The Movie-agent spy—His work before the War—A bottle of ammonia—An indiscreet M.P.—The prisoner who walked to London.

IN the years before the War, the Special Department was rather troubled by the movements of a Dutch Jew theatrical manager of the name of Leo Pickard. He travelled round England with a most interesting "show"—a troupe of dwarfs and midgets. Curiously enough, he seemed not to find any profit except in places like Aldershot and Salisbury, and in our Naval ports. There, despite small audiences, he would stay a long while; in promising towns like Manchester and Sheffield, he appeared to find no interest whatever. We kept a sharp eye on his activities, but he certainly did nothing to add to our suspicions. Occasionally he went over to Holland, when, of course, we lost sight of him; on one occasion, at least, he was believed to have had a personal interview with Steinhauer while over there, but we had no definite proof of it.

A famous midget couple, the Brazilian Gondins, said to be the smallest conjuring couple in the world, worked for Pickard. They were little over three feet high, and they at least were innocent of the taint of spying as far as we could tell. A dwarf girl of the name of Little Mary, however, brought considerable suspicion on herself just before the War, when she was in Pickard's troupe at a time that some important military documents disappeared for a while, and we were morally certain then that Pickard had something sinister to do with the matter. Just after

this, Pickard himself ceased his wanderings and became manager of the Bijou Theatre at Hampstead; residents of that part of London may remember a tall, sallow man with a slight cast in one eye, who was always to be seen outside the box office of the "Bijou" at that time.

When war broke out, he left his position and became a cinematograph film dealer, which, as the Yard speedily noticed, caused him to move along his old round again, in and out of the military and naval towns. During 1914 and 1915 he seemed to do very little, and certainly he sent no news abroad. He was spending his money at a rate which must soon have left him almost penniless; and in the early part of 1916 he began buying some second-hand films in England for export to Holland. Three times during that summer he made a personal visit to the Film Censor authorities, asking their permission to send 50,000 feet of film to Holland, to a man called Blom. On a police recommendation that permission was refused.

A few days after his last application Pickard walked into a restaurant off Long Acre, and sat down at the only disengaged table. Two minutes later, another man entered and sat down at the same table. He got into conversation with the newcomer, and was surprised to find him a film agent also. Pickard started fiercely abusing the Censors for what he called their senseless restriction on business. Then he winked. "But they can't stop me sending stuff over to Holland," he whispered. "And I make better money because they can't get much from here. Look!" And he pulled out a thick wad of notes and displayed them before his companion's eyes. His companion—myself—realized immediately that all that money had not been earned by the trade which Pickard outwardly pursued.

I warned the Censor to look out for his letters to Blom of Holland. A day or two later the Censor had a letter in



GEORGE VAUX BACON

American citizen. Arrested at Dublin, Ireland, for espionage. Court-martial Westminster Guildhall 26th February, 1917. Sentenced to death by hanging. Commuted to penal servitude for life. Subsequently handed over to the American Government to give evidence against German agents in U.S.A.



LEOPOLD VIEYRA ALIAS PICKARD

Dutch subject. Arrested at Acton for espionage. Court-martial Westminster Guildhall 14th November, 1916. Convicted. Sentenced to death. Commuted to penal servitude for life.

his hands, signed Leo Pickard, saying that trade was very bad in London, and that nothing could be done until the Film Censors could be won over. I tested the letter to make sure that it was quite free from hidden messages, and finally let it go. In due course there came a reply from P. Blom, suggesting that Pickard should try what he could do in the provinces, especially the seaports. It was obvious that our seaports would not have any second-hand films for sale. I went round to Pickard's lodgings, very early in a cold winter morning.

An untidy girl opened the door an inch or two and said through the crack that she was Mrs. Pickard, and that her husband was out. That was six o'clock. I explained that I was a detective officer, and must search the house. The girl looked as if she would slam the door in my face; then thought better of it. "He's in bed, if you must know," she said sullenly as we went up the stairs, "and he don't want to be disturbed."

The man lying in bed in the mouldy-smelling room looked at the girl as I entered in a way that made her cringe and whimper some excuse. But Mr. Pickard had finished his brutality in that quarter for a little while.

Under the bed was a squat ink-bottle filled with a yellowish liquid. Lemon-juice and formalin again, by the smell of it, for flung into one corner of the squalid room was a squeezed lemon, and the bottle smelt strongly of the juice. With a good deal of profanity, Pickard asked me what I was doing. When I silently held up the bottle, he swore horribly and told me to put it down. "It's eyebrow restorer, blast you," he shouted, "and I don't want to have to make more of it because of a — fool of a policeman." I put it in my pocket, and told him shortly enough to get up and dress.

The girl who had come to the door was by this time in

floods of tears. She admitted that she was Pickard's mistress, and that she worked in a nearby restaurant, where he had scraped an acquaintance with her. I told her to go home, and she went off, crying quietly. In an empty room on the ground floor I found several rolls of cinematograph film. I undid a length of one of the rolls, and found on its edge certain markings. Holding it up to the light I could read detailed information scratched on the edge which, had it gone abroad, would have done us incalculable harm. This man was a dangerous spy indeed. On a mantelpiece in the room was a bottle of ammonia, and a pen whose nib was corroded with ammonia and smelt faintly of it. I asked Pickard, who had now donned a rather flashy suit, what he used ammonia for in his work.

"Cleaning the films before I send them abroad," he replied, with a further flow of abuse and blasphemy.

Ammonia, of course, destroys films, not cleans them. I took the man along with me, and for all his threats, he did not lift a finger to resist. Sitting in the taxi, he tried a new course. As we bumped along in the darkness he said in a wheedling tone that he could give me some useful information about spies if I liked to have it. I told him to wait till we reached the Yard. When we got there, he was all ready to turn King's Evidence—for a price. He was told that nothing whatever could be promised him, but that the fact would be mentioned at his trial. The information he gave us was as much false as true, but some of it served us later. At his trial he escaped the death penalty, but was given penal servitude for life. In later years, in Germany, he was said to have boasted that he had been responsible for the sinking of the *Hampshire*, but that also, no doubt, was a lie, though he certainly had access to very secret and important military information before his arrest.

Shortly after this I was called to the Yard one morning and shown a copy of a leading American newspaper. There, in staring headlines, was a report of the blowing-up of a big munition dump behind our lines in France, in which a number of men had been killed and injured. The story was a good deal exaggerated; and I was told that the same story, very much more enlarged, had been printed in the German papers, and was very bad propaganda for us in Germany. Certain data was given me, showing that the article had been constructed from facts sent in a letter to a Russian in New York, a man named Raffalovich, and that the letter had originated from an English Member of Parliament. This man's house in Surrey I was instructed to raid.

Examination of the house showed that the M.P. had apparently been indiscreet rather than malevolent. There were letters there from his American correspondent, and it was obvious that he had sent the story to America; but it was also obvious that he was as loyal as myself. He was, however, tried and fined £100 and 25 guineas costs, as a warning to others not to be so careless with news which might harm our country if allowed to go abroad. A little later, the Member, who took his reproof in rather bad part, complained in the House that plain-clothes police were present, and was told by the Speaker that, in view of certain threats of physical violence from an unruly Irish faction, the Speaker had himself applied for police protection.

At this time a letter from Copenhagen to Berlin was put by accident into the English bag. It stated quite openly that the writer, who had left the letter unsigned, was starting for England as a spy, his nominal trade being the sale of those little gas-lighters which make a spark when the trigger is pulled. Without a signature or any clue to the date of arrival, we were not greatly helped; but a couple of

weeks later, our search for a suspicious seller of lighters was rewarded. A young Jew had been caught trying to board a ship at Newcastle, apparently in the hope of going back to Scandinavia, and his stock-in-trade was a case full of the lighters in question.

When I first saw this man he was full of righteous indignation. I asked him a few questions, including one about his destination when he reached Copenhagen. He promptly gave me the address which was on the letter we had intercepted! I took it from my pocket, read him the address and began to read the letter. The man jumped to his feet, clicked his heels and saluted. "Sir," he said, "you are quite right. I am a German soldier; I confess it."

That, however, was not a perfectly correct statement of the case. Search in our records proved him to be a criminal released from a German prison after a couple of days' detention, fairly obviously for spying. Among his effects were found the usual invisible writing set, and certain notes on the backs of old envelopes that showed that he was not a safe man to leave at liberty. He was hanged at Wandsworth, but he kept his courage till the last.

Like almost all the other German spies, he incurred suspicion by making no obvious efforts to follow the trade by which he was supposed to make money to live. He had the lighters in his case, and seemed to think that a sufficient alibi; during two days in which he was shadowed by the police he made no effort whatever to sell his goods. Yet he had plenty of money, and received more by post from a Scandinavian address; a very unusual thing for an out-at-elbows street hawker. As far as we could tell, his lighter stock was untouched when he was arrested.

Among all these stories of police successes it seems only fair to tell one tale against ourselves. Otto Homke, a

German naval prisoner of war, escaped from Bramley Camp in Hampshire. He could speak no English and had no disguise to cover his grey German jumper, grey shorts and top boots. He walked stolidly up to the nearest policeman, and said in an enquiring tone, "London ?" The policeman pointed out the main road through Basingstoke and replied, "Straight on, Sir !"

By the time he had got a few miles on his road his escape had been discovered, and a hue and cry was set up after him. But he plodded steadily on towards London, feeding on apples and pears, and sleeping under hedges. For seventeen days he eluded all our police forces; and then, asking a City policeman the way to the Docks, his luck deserted him and he was arrested. Poor Otto ; he almost deserved to get away with it!

CHAPTER XIII

George Vaux Bacon and the pseudo-American journalist spies—The man who taught Swedish drill—Germany's nastiest spy is shot dead.

DURING 1916 attempts were made to blow up several munition dumps in England. Two of the attempts were fruitless because the plots were discovered before any harm had taken place; the other was partly successful, an explosion being caused, but only a little harm being done because of the prompt application of various safety devices. In connection with these efforts, however, we came upon certain lines of suspicion, and these led to a number of so-called American journalists then in England.

Nothing could be proved against these men, fifteen of whom we suspected in Britain and Ireland. They represented various American papers, went all over the country collecting news, but otherwise behaved in an exemplary manner. The only doubtful action on their part was that one or other of them was constantly visiting the United States, so that there was hardly ever a month in which no visit had been made. That was not in accordance with ordinary newspaper procedure.

After some time we narrowed down our clues, and found that all fifteen of these reputed journalists were in touch with two men in the United States, one of whom was dramatic critic of the *Deutsche Journal*, and the other a German naturalized in America. This discovery was soon

followed by another. The men who visited America always reported personally to one or both of these individuals. America, at that time, was still neutral, so we could not trace very exactly what was happening there, but things began to look black for the suspected men in this country.

One of their number was a typical American-looking man, called George Vaux Bacon. Thin, hard-bitten, nattily dressed, and wearing yellow low-cut shoes, this man's twang was the only thing that was doubtful about him. It was a little too pronounced. He travelled about England and Ireland a good deal, and had already made a couple of visits to America when we came across a really suspicious bit of evidence against him. That was just after Christmas 1916.

He had been for two or three weeks staying in London and endeavouring, as he explained it, to obtain for his paper some articles on the air defences of the city. He had certainly been suspiciously eager in seeking information about our anti-aircraft guns, defence squadrons of planes, and so on, and we had reason to believe at the Yard that he had collected rather too much. We had not gained any tangible evidence against him, however, and were hoping to catch him out when he tried to send the details he had discovered to his employers in the States. His general correspondence gave us no clue; indeed, he and his friends seldom wrote letters except the merest formal communications. But I felt a conviction in my bones that the man was a spy; and at that time we were suffering quite enough from raids without the additional trouble of Germany knowing the arrangement of our London air defences.

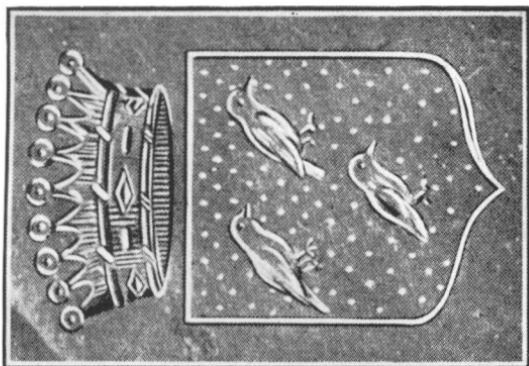
A couple of days later Bacon went over to Dublin, and this time I went along in his train. In Dublin he went

straight to an hotel where another of the pseudo-journalists was staying. I went, too; and the first thing I learned was that the man he had come to see was due to return to America the same week. Coming immediately on top of all my doubts, this journey seemed very suspicious indeed. It occurred to me with startling clearness that I had stumbled on the way the leakage of information was guided to Germany; a homing "journalist" took it in person to the American agents, and they conveyed it from America by some method of their own.

Mr. Bacon, when I called on him, was bluff and business-like. Sure I could have a look at his room; any help he could give me was mine for the asking. Yes; he'd come to see his friend off, and to ask him to take over one or two little messages to friends at home. Nothing wrong in that, he hoped. And could I tell him anything about the air defences of London? Oh, come, now—a Detective-Inspector would sure know something useful about it? He was real interested in the subject, and was trying to make one or two good articles about it with a touch of truth and sincerity in them.

I could find nothing wrong with his room. The man himself sounded as innocent as I was. I was just going to go out when my eyes fell on his hand, which was resting on the table where he sat. It was a hard, strong hand, and the nails were none too well cared for; and yet, on his dressing-table lay an expensive tortoise-shell mounted manicure set. His hands had not been manicured for weeks, beyond ordinary nail-cutting. I turned back into the room, and in turning noticed for the first time the top of a novel sticking out of his pocket. He had kept it hidden before, apparently. I asked him to let me have a look at it, and he cheerfully drew it out of his pocket and passed it to me. The pages of it seemed ordinary enough; but on the inside

ANTON BAUMBERG ("COUNT ANTON DE BORCH") AND THE
SEAL HE INVARIABLY USED



of both front and back covers were a number of minute pricks. I put it in my pocket, and went over and collected the manicure set from the dressing-table. Its implements were perfectly clean, but one of them was pointed and might well have made those pin-pricks. And the tube of nail-polish was of a thin, colourless kind I had never seen before. This tube was half-emptied, but the little pad with which it should have been applied had never been used.

" You must come with me, Mr. Bacon," I said, rather triumphantly.

The man's nerve was splendid. He showed just the right amount of annoyance, without offering to resist. He threatened that we would have to pay heavy damages for wrongful arrest, and asked if he could send a note down to his friend below. I told him it would depend on what he wanted to say. He replied that I could read it; and asked me, as there was no notepaper in the room, whether I would write it for him or let him write it on the flyleaf of the novel I had taken from him. When I said that I wanted the novel for evidence, and offered to write the message on a leaf of my own notebook, he looked huffed and said that it didn't matter.

I believe that novel gave some little trouble before the covers revealed their secrets. But after treatment with certain chemicals, a map supposed to represent certain air defences gradually appeared inside the front cover, and a sketch of estimated aeroplane bases in another district showed on the other. The second map was largely from guesswork, and was only partly correct, but the first, as far as it went, was dangerously nearly correct. If that map had fallen into German hands incalculable harm might have been done us.

The nail-polish was, as I had suspected, the secret ink

in which the plans were drawn. The prick-marks I had noticed were places where guns were supposed to be stationed; in trying to make dots the manicure implement had occasionally proved too sharp. In February 1917 Bacon was tried before a Court Martial at the Guildhall at Westminster. The solemn proceedings broke his nerve, and he admitted his guilt, and said that the two American-Germans, Sander and Wunnenberg, were his employers, and that information was conveyed personally to them by one or other of the pseudo-journalists on their visits to America. That was the way in which he had intended to send his plans of our air defences.

He was sentenced to death by hanging, but the sentence was commuted to penal servitude for life. Before he had served many months, however, the entry of America into the War caused him to be sent over to America, to give information about spies there. Sander and Wunnenberg were arrested on his evidence, and were each sentenced to two years imprisonment and a fine of 2,500 dollars. Both men pleaded guilty without calling any defence, in order to save the names of other spies in the States; but Bacon gave away all the facts which they tried to hide, and in doing so reduced his own sentence to a year and a day in prison and a fine of one dollar.

The next troublesome case we had to attend to was brought to our notice by an attendant at the Coldsterdale Internment Camp, in Yorkshire. He had been given a letter from one of the prisoners in the camp, addressed to a man called Carl Gustav Vingquist, a medical gymnastic director at Paddington. The letter was written in German, and when the attendant had been going round the camp seeing that everything was in order, the prisoner had slipped it into his hand with a whispered mention of a very substantial reward if he would have it delivered without

submitting it to the camp censoring authorities. Instead, he sent it to the Yard, with a covering note.

It was a candid letter. It said that Vingquist would remember the writer as an old school friend, and asked for money, a forged passport, and a map of the district in which the camp was situated. If possible, passports were to be sent for three other prisoners as well, as four of the men at the camp had decided to make a joint break for liberty. We photographed the letter and then sent it on its way.

The answer Mr. Vingquist sent enclosed a big-scale C.T.C. map of Coldsterdale district, and said that money and passports were very difficult to obtain, because of "these pigs of English and their precautions." So of course I had to call on the abusive gentleman, and ask him to answer for his sins in court. Swedish drill expert he may have been, but he was emphatically a man of no physique, and he looked as if he had never done a hard day's work in his life. He was still abusive in court, and was given a sentence of six months' hard labour, and recommended for deportation. The man, Lundberg, who wrote to him was a Swede who had been captured when serving with the German army; he was warned not to make any further attempts to escape.

In the autumn of 1917 Germany lost a man who might fairly have claimed the title of her nastiest spy. And this man did not die at the Tower or at the hands of the hangman, but was shot by a young British officer home on leave. The story is an interesting one, and I can mention it shortly in passing. It began dramatically, when an Artillery lieutenant walked into an Edgware Road police station and gave himself up for shooting a man whom he described as "a Jewish spy." Asked his reason for the shooting, he replied that the man had been too intimate with his

wife, though he denied that anything more had happened than that there was an attempt to persuade her to run away from him while he was in France.

The details of the case showed very blackly on the dead man's character. A Jewish draper's assistant, born in Poland, he had changed his name when still in his early twenties and claimed the title of Count Anton de Borch. His real name was Anton Baumberg, and he made the alteration because he did not wish his Jewish ancestry to be obvious. He was in Berlin in 1914, and explained away the visit by saying that he was trying to get work there. Actually, he had been living with a notorious woman who called herself the Baroness de Borch, and from that time, in a mean and despicable way, he tried to send secret information to Germany via her address in Holland.

In 1914 he had joined up and actually received a commission, but six months later he was expelled from the Army with the indication that His Majesty had no further wish for his services. He had then tried to obtain information from officers' wives and in other very unpleasant ways, and in 1917 had met the wife of the young Artillery officer, who was then away at the Front. On his next leave that officer had warned the bogus Count that he must leave his wife alone in future; and when, on a later leave in the autumn, he had come upon the man in the very act of trying to persuade his young wife to run away with him, he had drawn his service revolver and emptied all its contents into the man's body at close range. The dead man, when I examined him, looked the epitome of meanness and beastliness. He had been receiving about £100 a year from Holland, apparently for some sort of spied information, and judging from his known character I should say that he made up all the news he sold. The lieutenant was found not guilty at his trial, and discharged

without a stain on his character, amid tremendous applause and cheering. It was a decision and a scene very seldom observed in an English court, but despite its irregularity it seemed the only just and equitable decision possible after such details as the case had presented.

CHAPTER XIV

An ex-Lord Mayor of Sheffield is degraded from knighthood—Fritz Duquesne, the world's master spy—Women spies have the last word—Are there spies among us to-day?

THE most astounding arrest in England during 1918 was undoubtedly that of Sir Joseph Jonas, ex-Lord Mayor of Sheffield, head of a huge steel-manufacturing firm, and supplier of vast amounts of munitions to the Government for war use. This man had been the friend of two Kings, and seemed to be the last person in all England on whom suspicion could fall. He had been born in Germany of German parents, but had naturalized in this country as a young man. Starting a small steel business in Sheffield he had married a Sheffield woman, seen his shop prosper and spread till it employed several thousands of workmen, and had gained the respect of his fellow-townsmen. In 1905 he was knighted, and in subsequent years he had given large sums of money to charities, including considerable amounts to the University, and he was universally considered to be a perfect choice for the position of Lord Mayor.

During this time, of course, he had retained a large number of German friends, notable among whom was a young German of the name of Carl Hahn, and his father, after whom he was named, both of whom lived in England. Another friend and business acquaintance was a certain Paul von Gontard, who was working just before the War in Krupp's armament works at Essen, and who opened a steel works of his own in Berlin in the autumn of 1914.

In the June of that year, a number of high officials from Krupp's made a trade visit to England, and were shown over the Sheffield works, as well as over a number of other big steel manufactories in this country.

On the outbreak of war, young Carl Hahn changed his name by Deed Poll. Sir Joseph Jonas, who seemed as English at heart as ever, obtained for his firm the biggest allocations for high-grade steel of any firm in Sheffield. During 1915 and 1916 it supplied practically all the bayonet steel for the Allies, and its reputation was of the highest.

I made a lightning raid on Sheffield, and brought the 73-year-old knight down to London with me, to answer a grave charge of having collected information with intent to convey it to the enemy. Then I went as speedily southwest to Cornwall, where I arrested Carl Hahn. I also brought in Carl Hahn, the father. The substance of the case against the three was that it was alleged that they had attempted to convey to Germany details of a certain new rifle that was then being officially tested.

Mr. Tindal Atkinson, K.C., appeared with Mr. Walter Frampton for Sir Joseph; the late Sir Edward Marshall-Hall, K.C., and the late Mr. Huntly Jenkins for Hahn Junior; and Sir Ernest Wild, K.C., for Hahn, while they were opposed by Sir Frederick Smith (Attorney-General), Sir Richard Muir, and Mr. G. A. Branson for the Crown, the case being tried before Mr. Justice P. O. Lawrence. Altogether it was as nice a collection of legal brilliance as I have ever seen in one court. The case lasted from June 13th to July 30th, and was very keenly disputed. But police evidence was incontrovertible, though even now I am not permitted to say anything about the way in which we obtained it. In the end, judgment went against the ex-Lord Mayor, who was found guilty of grave mis-

demeanour, and called upon to pay a fine of £2,000, while Hahn Junior had to pay £1,000; and costs—which must have been enormous—were given against the defendants.

That was not quite the end of the matter. At the end of August, Sir Joseph Jonas was degraded from his knighthood by the King, and also denaturalized because of the part he had played in the conspiracy. There were persons in England at the time who thought that judgment harsh, but they were people who knew little of the facts of the case. I have been looking through my own notes, made at the time and with full knowledge of all the turns of the affair, and I think that the man who was once Lord Mayor of Sheffield escaped very lightly indeed, probably on account of his age and his firm's former service to England.

Any account of spying in the war years would be incomplete without a word on the astounding career of Fritz Duquesne, the only man I have ever heard of who could lay any claim to the title of a Master Spy. I never came into contact with him because he never operated in this country; but I would have given a year's pay to enjoy a tussle with this extraordinary man. During nearly the whole of the War, he operated in South America, realizing that he could harm us far more from such a place than he could have done from England. That alone showed him to be a man of foresight. Indeed, he was known as such to us already, for he had featured as a successful spy and had miraculously escaped from justice several times during the South African War, when he worked for the Boers to some considerable effect.

His first success in the Great War was the dynamiting of the s.s. *Salvador*, by putting bricks of explosive material among her coal. She left port for England with a food cargo and was never heard of again. Doubtless she blew herself to bits somewhere in the middle of the South

Atlantic. The s.s. *Vauban* was almost destroyed by fire following a similar explosion, but managed to limp into Gibraltar with her cargo ruined and seven of her crew killed. Bahia coaling station was mysteriously fired one night, and the flames spread and destroyed the whole place. H.M.S. *Pembrokeshire* was dynamited in the same way as the *Salvador*, and four other merchant vessels left South America and never reached a port, and were subsequently claimed as his victims by Duquesne, who by the way was a singularly modest man.

Three times during the War this will-o'-the-wisp was sighted by detectives. Once, as he crept into the hold of a half-freighted vessel in a South American port, a waiting pursuer leapt out at him, but was stunned by a blow on the head from a revolver butt. Once the house in which he was lodging was surrounded and raided, and the man escaped over the neighbouring flat roofs. And once, when actually overpowered aboard a vessel he had come to sink, he was put into a boat to be taken ashore, he managed to leap overside and dive—and disappeared as if the sea had swallowed him up.

The last time, he was believed to have been drowned, but in 1919 a sharp-eyed detective in New York saw him strolling along Broadway, dressed in the uniform of a captain of the Australian Light Horse, and wearing medal ribbons of the South African and Matebele wars and of the Long Service Medal. He was arrested and clapped into the strongest prison in New York to await extradition to England to answer a charge of murdering British seamen. Next morning, when the warders went with food to his cell, it was empty. How he had escaped, no one ever knew. The locks on the cell were unbroken, and there was no other apparent exit save the closed door. The sentries in the corridor outside had noticed no disturbance. A month

later the United States police received a letter from Duquesne, written in his old spirited style, saying that he had enjoyed his journey by car to a famous Philadelphia air-field and had flown thence to Mexico. The letter bore the Mexican stamp. Since then the man has disappeared from view until recently, when he was dramatically re-arrested in New York. Will he, eventually, be brought back to stand his trial in England? Or is our Government ready to let bygones be bygones in the case of this agent who, as far as a spy could, played the man in the station to which he was called.

Among the spies whom I arrested women had the last word. In August 1918 a letter was stopped addressed to a German Baroness in Dresden. It was a trivial letter enough, talking mostly of women's matters, till tested for secret writing. Once more the familiar red writing began to show. As a matter of fact, the information contained in the letter was mostly wrong and not at all important, but the intention of harming England was clear in every line. I was obliged to arrest the author, a German-born widow of a Prussian officer. At her house in the Tulse Hill district lived also her daughter, a young married woman who was even more fanatically pro-German than her mother. In various parts of the house I found the secret ink, the pen used to apply it, notepaper similar to that used for the letter to Dresden, and a number of newspaper clippings reporting slight British reverses at the Front, evidently to be sent with the idea of providing germs for German newspaper articles which should show how the brave German army was winning victory after victory on the Western Front. The case was rather a tame one, and the sentences were not heavy. The mother received sentence of twelve months imprisonment in the second division, the daughter was fined £50 and recommended

for internment. A month or two afterwards the bugles sounded "Cease Fire," and the spy menace in England was over at last.

Are there spies in England to-day? If I could answer that question in the affirmative, the Yard would soon put its hand on my examples and then I should be left as uncertain as ever. On the whole, I should say that spying since the War has become almost a dead letter. Unless nations have the war spirit in their hearts, they don't bother to probe other nations' secrets. And since the Great War proved that modern warfare is as costly for the victor as for the vanquished, there is a nausea at the very name of hostilities. Besides which, police work is becoming so highly organized and so aided by mechanical and scientific devices that a spy would not really have much chance. Thinking the matter well over, I should say that serious spying is rapidly going the way of bows and arrows. I believe that England's war experiences wrote the last chapter to a history of intrigue and secret service which has gone on from the days of the fighting tribes of earliest Palestine. Civilization has at long last succeeded in leaving the spy no more than the pages of boys' books as a wandering-place. He has fallen behind the times, and no one is sorry. May he rest in peace and trouble us no more.

BOOK III
REFLECTIONS

CHAPTER I

Looking at crime to-day—The foreign criminal menace—How two of them were caught—How to weed them out.

THE obvious starting-place for a book on the police outlook to-day is the subject of the foreign criminal, for more than half our country's police expenses are directly attributable every year to the foreigners we harbour. It is an accepted fact that nine-tenths of the American gunmen are Italians, Russians, Scandinavians, Germans and South Americans by descent, and that the apaches of the Paris gutter number few true-bred French men among them. Similarly, if Great Britain could sweep out and keep out the non-British element of her criminal world, the taxpayers' burdens of police expenses would be lowered by half.

Let me give a single example of a course of crime which has no equal among the records of our home-born criminals. A German Jew deliberately fired his furniture shop in Shoreditch in December 1920. He made so much from the insurance payments which covered his losses that he suggested the same swindling scheme to a number of other shopkeepers, sharing the profits with them. He accumulated several pieces of specially valuable charred furniture, which he "planted" in the various premises which were subsequently fired, and on which high insurance payments could easily be claimed. For his own shop he received £1,740, which was far more than it was worth; in 1922 he claimed and received a big sum for a burglary; a few months later he arranged a swindle over a burglary for

which £1,760 was paid; and several claims for fires and burglaries followed from various sources, all suggested by this man during the next few months. An accomplice—also a German Jew—claimed £10,000 for two fires in two years. These two men together were said at their trial to have been responsible for over a hundred fires and burglaries in three years, and to have claimed something like a quarter of a million pounds from various Insurance Companies, most of which was paid. In 1923 the two burned their clothing rather badly when a premature explosion of some petrol they had taken to start a fire betrayed them to a policeman who saw them run from the house just after a fire had broken out. Both received long terms of imprisonment and were recommended for deportation.

That sort of thing is a very un-English kind of crime. Nor is the foreigner trouble confined to direct misdemeanours. Without Orientals, our drug-pest could be exterminated quite easily, but drug-running indirectly employs in its lower grades thousands of our crooks. Prostitution, in some way or other the basic cause of most murders, is managed by foreign bullies and largely carried on by foreign women. Financial swindles of greater or lesser magnitude embroil hundreds of thousands of decent people, and they are usually carried out by American or Jewish organizers. Indeed, it seems to be an axiom of police work that each nation exports its more troublesome element overseas in exchange for birds of a similar feather from other nations. Indeed, it is said in United States police circles that the biggest gangster on that side of the water, not even barring Al Capone, is a lad who was born and bred in Liverpool.

However that may be, there is no doubt that our own immigration laws need a good deal of attention. Politicians argue that too fine a sieve to keep out the scum of other

nations makes us unpopular abroad. Nonsense! We don't want to exclude foreigners of decent status who come here to spend money, but merely the ones who are definitely suspected by the Yard of coming here with the purpose of taking British money away with them in a variety of shady ways. At present we are too inclined to make our country a haven for all the blackguards and scoundrels whom no one else will house. Unlike most other lands, we seldom refuse a landing to a man, no matter what his character may be, unless he has already openly flouted our laws to an amazing extent.

We may know that an international crook is coming to settle down in Hatton Garden, or that a notable French cat-burglar has taken a flat in Mayfair in the middle of the season, but unless he has already appeared before our own courts, we do no more than keep a perfunctory eye on him. True, if he makes trouble here, we usually know where to go to find him—his personal chances of escape are slender—but such men as these are aware of what will happen, and see to it that the goods they have collected are already vanished into thin air by the time the official hand falls on their shoulder. And then, even if a sentence can be obtained, it is usually worth while, for the profits are vast for a clever crook.

When we deport a man—and this is never done without the most extreme justification—then, admittedly, our police force sees to it that he stays away, and in this particular we are a long way ahead of any other country I can name. The deportee is moved out of the country, and all our ports are warned of his appearance and dossier. If he comes back, no matter how clever his disguise, no matter how well faked his passport (and usually such a man promptly changes his name not necessarily by legal methods when he has been deported), his chances of slipping through our coastal

cordon of police is almost nil. Very few deported criminals are unwise enough to try a return, but certain drug-running "bosses" do so, with the almost inevitable result that they make a lengthy acquaintance with the interior of one of our bigger prisons.

One of the greatest of present police difficulties in connection with foreign criminals at present is the ease with which foreign women can get into England. Despite all precautions all our big ports possess a type of out-of-work waterside loafer and odd-job criminal the larger part of whose income is derived from making marriages of convenience with incoming alien women, who thus acquire their "husbands'" English nationality, and so are far more difficult to punish.

The system is simple. After corresponding with a compatriot in this country, a Continental prostitute or woman crook is told to arrive at a certain port at a certain day. There she is met by her correspondent, who meanwhile has picked up from a neighbouring public house one of the obliging "husbands." The three go along to the nearest registry office, give what notice may be required, subsequently go through a form of marriage, a twenty-pound note changes hands, and the woman never sees her husband again. On the other hand she can always produce her marriage certificate showing her to be a British national; and she cannot then be sent out of the country.

The punishment for this form of crime is hard to administer, and apt to be negligible anyway. As far as the law is concerned, it can punish the woman for her misdeeds, but if she is not an alien it cannot deport her. There is no requirement at law for a husband and wife to live together —theoretically if they choose to part at the registrar's door they can do so. Unless bigamy can be proved, there is no case for a serious police prosecution. Consequently, our

ports are always open to women procurers, prostitutes, thieves, shop-lifters and all the undesirables of the world, so long as they can arrange a sham marriage over here on landing. And even a cursory study of the police news of any week-end will show how ready foreigners are to profit from our stupidity.

During my career I had a good deal to do with our foreign criminal importations. My work in the Special Branch, dealing with political criminals, spies, secret societies and so on, naturally took me among them, since in our political as well as other forms of crime, foreigners outnumber the home product. It may shock readers to know that in parts of most of our great cities there are large areas which I could fairly mark with solid patches of yellow, black, brown or similar distinctive colours to indicate that they are populated almost entirely by colonies of foreigners—and mostly foreign crooks at that! Limehouse, for instance, would be coloured yellow, to show its Chinamen; Soho and Clerkenwell speak Italian to such an extent that it is essential to know Italian to do police work there; the negroes have their stronghold round Commercial Road; part of the West End and one part of Liverpool are nearly as brown as Bombay; Glasgow has its Chinese area into which white people seldom dare intrude; outside Glasgow, certain mining districts are solidly populated by Poles and Letts; and Cardiff numbers many thousands of Arabs along its waterside.

Scotland Yard has long known all this; the public should also know it, for it is a menace that threatens our social peace more alarmingly every year. Crimes go on in some of these colonies at which our police, newspapers and public never so much as guess. It is said among sailors who berth in the Thames (and sailors know even more than policemen because of their habit of splashing their money about when

on shore and so offering easy game for all sorts of crooks) that there are trapdoors in some of the riverside houses through which tons of drugs come up and dozens of bodies go down; that Chinatown, for instance, is ruled by a judicial system of its own, and one of horrible callous cruelty and injustice into the bargain; that voodoo rites are practised by negroes in the heart of the West End of London that would sicken the soul of the most hardened of our own murderers. And, even allowing for probable exaggeration, it is as well to remember that there's not usually smoke without some sort of a fire being present, even if it is only a little one.

There is another and even more serious side to the question. The United States to-day is suffering from exactly the complaint we may expect to have in fifty years time, unless we alter our present immigration laws. Over there the numbers of the coloured and other imported races are already—if one counts the people of German, Italian and Scandinavian stock—outnumbering the pure-bred Americans. It is serious enough when such a thing happens with other white people as the leaven, but that can be borne, and in time perhaps the whole lump may be said to have improved. But when coloured races begin to increase so as to threaten in time to outnumber the white ones, things take on a more sombre hue. America, at the present moment, is looking forward anxiously to the future on some such account; we are nowhere near that state yet, but we are importing more coloured people every day, we are making conditions ideal for them here, they are allowed to practise as teachers, lawyers, doctors even, in our midst, they possess their own colonies in the centres of our great ports—in fact, we are not looking forward quite enough.

I am no Yellow Peril fanatic, but merely a man who has spent a lifetime at Scotland Yard with unusual facilities for

watching the ebb and flow of immigration. I hold my own views about the undesirability of admitting too many aliens largely because I have noticed that nearly all foreigners who come to England marry English men or women, and never in the whole of my career have I seen such a marriage improve the English party to it. Moreover, any policeman will agree with me when I say that the half-breed results of such marriages, in practically every single case, find their way sooner or later into the ranks of our criminal classes, and provide the most vicious and dangerous types among them. I leave social reform to those more fitted to tackle it, but I cannot but admit that when colours mix the worst qualities of both come out every time in the offspring, and that offspring causes endless trouble to the police and the community later.

In fairness, I must add that I do not mean to pose as a Little Englander, or to argue against other nations merely because they are not my nation. I have met many police chiefs in Paris, New York and elsewhere, and I have often talked over this problem with them; and I think I can fairly say that every policeman, no matter what his nationality, agrees that his country's trouble comes mostly from foreigners. Nor is this prejudice; I have seen the dossiers of English criminals in America who leave the United States "lag" standing for troublesomeness and daring.

It may be perhaps that in a strange country crime offers the only way to riches for a morally weak and loose-charactered man or woman. It may be that the itch to travel goes with criminal tendencies, or that some early escapade at home makes another country seem desirable. Whatever it is, the foreign criminal problem seems for all nations to be a case of rabbits to Australia—they're not nearly so bad at home as they are when they get to fresh fields and pastures new!

CHAPTER II

Secret societies in Great Britain—Ku Klux Klan members here—Soho's Italian societies which have their own laws—Chinese societies in Limehouse.

TO mention secret societies calls to most people's minds the name of the Ku Klux Klan, and the thought is then dismissed with the comfortable feeling that such things do not affect Great Britain. As a matter of fact, there are known headquarters of the dreaded Mafia and Camorra Societies in Soho and Kensington respectively; there are over a dozen known anarchist societies who call periodical conclaves in our big towns; an attempt to murder a Chinese seaman recently was traced to one of the many Chinese societies of Limehouse; and a very famous American Ku Klux Klansman was recognized in London a few weeks ago by an American journalist who was staying here as the guest of one of our London papers. As there is black magic and white magic, so there are less sinister but equally secret societies, each with an enormous hold on England's daily life; among them are the Crusaders, with Princes and Generals among its members; the Masons and many others.

Everyone is familiar with the high pointed cap and long robe of the Ku Klux Klan, which is said to have obtained its name from the sound made by the cocking of a rifle. Originally formed to check the outrages of coloured soldiers after the American Civil War, the terrifying garb was used to strike fear into superstitious hearts. Now the league opposes all forms of injustice and tyranny in this

country as well as in America. Strange stories are told of white-clad figures riding up to English country houses at midnight and extracting promises from certain of the inmates in the name of the Ku Klux authorities, and several times statements have been made in America that a very powerful branch of the society operates in England. But since even America does not know the names of the Klansmen and their officers, these statements are hard to check.

An interesting story was told to me in this connection a few weeks ago. A young man of title at Oxford spent a recent vacation at a big country house which an American of doubtful repute had leased in Norfolk. At the end of the holiday, the visitor had lost so much money at various forms of gambling to his host, who had left America because of a card-sharping scandal, that the lad was desperate and threatened to blow his brains out. An American undergraduate friend of his heard the story, and made him promise not to do anything at least until the time of grace which his host had given him to make the payments had elapsed. Two days before that date he received a formal letter from his ex-host saying that all his debts had been paid in full, though the boy himself had not been able to settle more than a minute proportion of them. On making enquiries he discovered that the American had shut up the house and left England for good; and a former valet swore that his master had been visited at midnight by a posse of silent horsemen in the Klan uniform who privately interviewed him and told him that he must immediately leave this country and never return.

I can speak with the knowledge of personal experience that the Mafia still exists in a very active form. It is a Sicilian secret society sworn to a kind of brotherhood of vengeance on anyone who harms one of its members. In September 1892, a whole-hearted attempt was made to

clear this society out of Italy, where it wielded considerable political influence. About two hundred of its principal members were arrested, and numbers of others fled overseas and founded branches of the league in America and England. At about this time the New Orleans police made a round-up of Mafiusi there who were suspected of having taken part in a wholesale murder of a number of other Italians. The chief of the New Orleans police was promptly murdered, and the judges of the arrested men were so terrorized that most of the latter were liberated.

In Soho to-day there are clubs where members of the Mafia in London—and they number over a thousand—meet regularly for secret initiation of new entrants or to try before their society tribunal members accused of a crime against the league. Vendettas are faithfully carried on, though intensive police precautions prevent much actual violence from taking place in England. There have, however, during the last four years, been at least two murders committed which have loosely been attributed to "Race Gangs," but which were apparently carried out by Italian secret societies in the pursuance of private vendettas among themselves.

Perhaps the most powerful secret society of to-day is the Camorra, which operates in almost every civilized country. As recently as 1900, in a libel suit in Italy, astounding revelations were made of the power of this league, which led to the dissolution of the Naples municipality, where the society had its headquarters, and the appointment of a royal commissioner. Entry into the Camorra is by an initiation ceremony at which a mock duel is fought, the initiate's arm being deliberately wounded by his opponent. If the bullet enters the arm in the wrong place, death or permanent disablement may result, but that is a risk the entrant must minimize by standing perfectly still to receive the shot.

People of the highest social rank belong to this society, and there is said to be a London headquarters. Formerly a league for levying blackmail and controlling political parties, the Camorra is now more of a private society, with its avowed object the sustaining of a high code of family honour among its members. Novices have to open a vein in their own arm, dip their fingers in the blood, and swear to give up life itself if need be at the simple order of the society's local chief. The slightest disobedience is punished with death, carried out by another member, who is drawn by lot.

The Molly Maguires were originally an Irish secret society, but they rose to power in the United States at the time of the Civil War, and all their members to-day are Americans. At the end of last century, they became so powerful that they caused a general strike of the United States coal mines. A detective from the famous Pinkerton Agency was sent among them, joined the order, lived among them for two years, and became secretary of one of the most criminally active of all their branches. His evidence, when he had collected it, led to the imprisonment of most of the important leaders, and the society's power was broken and its members scattered.

Just before the outbreak of war, however, we came across a Molly Maguire lodge among the miners of Lancashire; it was much modified in its objects, as is the case of most secret societies which have lived into this century, but it kept to all the old rules and formulæ of the order. Since then it has grown and spread, and now the society numbers several hundreds of members here and in America. The present efforts of the league appear to be those of keeping local men in employment wherever a headquarters is formed, and to some extent intimidating strangers who seem likely to replace local labour or management.

Limehouse, with its Chinese secret societies, presents

the most serious problem in the way of hidden leagues that our police forces have to face. The Oriental mind is peculiarly suited to the secrecy and subtlety necessary to spread an effective veil over such activities; and there are definite reasons why it is to the profit of these societies to continue to exist along our Thames waterside. Drug-running and drug-selling is an enormous and widespread trade with fantastic profits, and these profits actually supply the sinews of existence to more than one Chinese league.

Always instinct with a spirit of picturesque imagery yellow criminals are delighted to band themselves together under some such title as the League of the Sacred Lily, or the Fellowship of the Scarlet Dragon. One huge factor which makes the stamping-out of these societies difficult to our police is that nearly all their members are confirmed drug-fiends, and take their wages for work done in the form of a "shot" of cocaine or a pipeful of opium. And anyone who has had to do with a drug-taker knows that all sense of truth and morality seems to be absent, and that there is no reward in the whole world to equal that of the delicious sensuousness of the chosen drug, and no punishment in earth or Hell equal to the denial of the craving. Consequently the miserable wretches who live on very little else than opium and spirits develop fiendish cunning in carrying out the various tasks allotted them by the societies to which they belong, and are ready to commit any crime to obtain relief in the drug that has been promised them.

Another point is that these Chinese societies usually rule largely by a fear which the mere fear of legal punishment can never equal. The coolie who incurs the anger of his society is haled before some secret tribunal in a Limehouse cellar, and such tortures are devised for him as cannot be told in decent print. Every conceivable effort is made to prevent such things happening, but the police are handi-

capped by the fact that they must work along the known and trusted lines of British justice, and cannot even threaten a prisoner in order to extract a little truth from him.

In various of our seaport towns, the most active members of yellow secret societies are white girls who have married Chinamen, and have subsequently gone to whatever lengths their husbands have demanded in order to try to retain some shred of uncertain affection, or to avoid inconceivably brutal punishments for refusal. Social workers who read this book with horror must remember that the Oriental they see and admire on their infrequent visits to the Cardiff, Glasgow or London watersides, has specially prepared himself for the occasion in order to give a nice impression. Moving among these people as I have done when they have had no time to prepare the eyewash, and when their absolutely uncivilized essentials have been showing on the surface, I have learnt that they can change their outward appearance as easily as I can change a coat, and that they will do it whenever any profit is to be gained from such an alteration.

One cannot expect Easterns to have the same codes of honour as those which Westerns hold. According to their own peculiar codes, the yellow people in England's slums are strictly honourable. That, indeed, is the source of the power of their numerous secret societies; that they can tell to an inch how far to trust each other, and we can never tell at all. The trouble is that nearly without exception their hidden leagues are operated directly for the purposes of crime, and in that way they form one of the biggest problems in the whole of modern police work.

CHAPTER III

Modern blackmail—The cancer of modern society—All classes involved—Personal experiences—Police precautions—The public has the remedy in its own hands.

BY far the most disturbing factor in the crime records of this century is the spread of blackmail. Up to about 1900 this despicable felony was looked upon askance and practised very little; your Victorian boasted a stiff upper lip and was a bad person to attempt to bully or coerce. Moreover, police organization was not then nearly so perfect as it now is, and the blackmailer was liable to receive such severe corporal punishment as made him glad to have escaped with his life. Now, however, private individuals are afraid to take the law into their own hands for fear of modern, easily-spreading publicity; world communications have become so much faster that a man's reputation can be marred over half the world in a few weeks; and the spirit of almost slavish reliance on everyday conventional order and quiet has so seriously sapped the will to vigorous resistance that blackmail has grown to be a cancer threatening the very life of our modern civilization. "Anything for a quiet life," has degenerated into a universal watchword; but unfortunately the paying of Danegeld does not lead to a quiet life. More frequently it leads to hopeless suicide.

Blackmail is generally considered to be confined, as far as its victims are concerned, to the richer classes. Any policeman will assure you that the principal sufferers are really the respectable poorer people. Usually more sincere

and possessed of deeper feelings, they are also less level-headed and more liable to be carried away by an emotion of the moment. There must be hundreds of thousands of cases in every one of our big towns to-day in which a working man or woman is cruelly mulcted of weekly payments by some false friend who, having once been taken into confidence concerning some youthful indiscretion, has ever since used the knowledge as a lever with which to obtain a regular income. In every grade of life, from labourers and dustmen to bank clerks and commercial travellers, from typists to manageresses, from parsons to bishops and from lance-corporals to generals, the merciless pursuit goes on, and every week hundreds of thousands of pounds change hands because of covert threats or menacing looks.

Let me give a couple of examples which have recently come to my own notice. A girl factory hand was rescued a week or two ago, after she had thrown herself into the Thames. Taken to the nearest police station to give an account of herself and get into some dry clothes, she cried bitterly and said that she did not want to be saved. At last an explanation was forthcoming. A theft of money had taken place at her factory some weeks earlier, on a day when she herself had had occasion to go alone to the room from which the money had disappeared. Next morning, a work acquaintance had made the suggestion privately to her that she had taken the money. She indignantly denied having done so, but the other girl only laughed, and said that, unless a small share was forthcoming, she would mention her suspicions to the forewoman. The girl herself weakly paid what was demanded from her week's wages, rather than face a scandal; and after that the blackmail went on steadily each week. As she had to give her parents a proportion of her earnings, the result was that she could not

afford any midday meal. Finally, between weakness from hunger and fear of being accused, she tried to commit suicide. The case was hardly one for the police court, because the girl herself was pitifully afraid of any publicity, though the police satisfied themselves absolutely that she could not have taken any part in the original theft. But the Sergeant at the station where she was brought had himself a daughter of about the same age, and personally undertook the job of having a private talk with the young blackmailer. It was he who told me the story; and I gather from what he said that the young criminal he spoke to will think a long time before she tries that game again.

The other example concerned a highly-placed Church dignitary—a man whose fifty years of life have been spent doing good works, and who has the unqualified respect and affection of everyone who knows him. He lives in a forgotten country town, and comes to London two or three times a year for clerical conferences. About a year ago, on one such visit, he saw a girl selling matches in the gutter. She was holding a baby on one arm, and looked terribly weary, and the old man put three or four half-crowns into her hand. The girl looked at them, gasped, and begged that she might know the name of her kind helper so that, as she said, she could mention him in her prayers.

Affected by this evidence of Christian spirit, he mentioned his name and stayed talking to her for a few moments. She told a sad story of betrayal and ruin, and the baby whimpered an accompaniment. Finally he wrote a few words of introduction on a sheet from a notebook, gave it to her, and told her to take it to a brother clergyman in London who would try to help her. He then went back to his country home content at having done a kindly deed.

A few days later he received a letter from the girl making abominable accusations against him and saying that, unless

she received more money, she would publish them in his parish. Very foolishly, the old man wrote, enclosing a small amount of money, and saying that he did so out of pity rather than fear (which was doubtless perfectly true) and that his idea was only to entreat her to forsake such wicked ways of gaining money. A little while after, however, another letter followed; and so cleverly was it worded that it terrified the old clergyman, who had never had to do with such situations, into sending the amount then demanded.

The blackmail went on for months, and was only discovered because his wife heard him muttering about it in his sleep, for his nerves had broken down badly as a result of the worry. She, being a practical woman, made him tell her all about it; and then put a private detective on to the matter. This man, who is a professional acquaintance of mine and an old Yard officer, discovered some interesting facts. In the first place, the girl hired the baby from a neighbour, and pinched it to make it cry when benevolent-looking people were passing her "pitch." She found that it added to her income, which was generally something like six pounds a week. She had found the clergyman's address from a Clerical Directory, and had tried blackmail as a sideline. So successful had it proved that latterly she had abandoned her gutter work, and lived like a lady of means, doing no work. Regrettably enough, the old man was still too charitable to make a public case of it; so the matter was privately settled. He had lost his money, but he regained his peace of mind, and he knows what to do should such a thing occur again.

The greatest safeguard of blackmail in this country is that the blackmailed are so very averse to bringing a public case. It is not even now universally known that, no matter what the details of the case, a court will always suppress the name of the person who is suffering from blackmail or

threats of it. English law does not presume to judge litigants' morals or past misdeeds, but contents itself with the prevention of the actual blackmail attempt. Even if details of a former breach of the law are brought into court during the case, they will be suppressed from newspaper publication and they are practically never used by the police or legal authorities to embarrass the blackmailed. For the time being, the law has only one concern, and that is to safeguard the rights of the private citizen against any form of coercion or pressure.

The most severe punishment allowed by legal statutes is always given in such cases to the blackmailer because it is a byword at law that, for one such matter brought into court twenty are suffered in silence, and an effort is made, by punishing one offender with harshness, to discourage the others. There is only one treatment for any attempt to blackmail, no matter what the subject of the threat, and that is to communicate with the police at once. No payments should be made, no promises given, and no time wasted. Official instructions are that, in such a case, not even the nearest relatives of the sufferer shall be allowed to obtain knowledge of what is going on, or that the police have been informed. No publicity of any kind will be given then or afterwards, and every desire for secrecy can be complied with so long as it is within reasonable and possible limits. In any case, a talk with the nearest police officer commits the blackmailed to nothing, and will certainly enlighten him as to how far he can safely proceed in self-defence. So long as definite blackmail is being attempted, the law in this one case is prejudiced—it is ready to be all on the side of the blackmailed and utterly against his persecutor. If only that could be widely understood, the menace of blackmail would shrink; as things are to-day it is spreading so that about one person in every

thirty in our population is menaced by it. The public has the remedy in its own hands.

A considerable number of suicides and not a few murders each year are caused by this beastly form of crime. It is often realized by the police officers investigating a prostitute's murder that the miserable woman has threatened to betray some lover whose fear for his good name prompts him to run the risk even of the Black Cap. Not even the Royal houses of Continental Europe are free from the shadow of the blackmailer; the higher a man's position or the more universally respected his character, the more obvious a target does he offer to those who see easy money in the job of threatening him.

One Royal house was recently greatly concerned because, after the death of a minor member, certain persons wrote saying that the dead man had been indiscreet and had left letters and presents in a quarter where they should certainly not have been. Passages were quoted from the letters which, had they been published, might have caused very grave disturbances throughout the country, even possibly ending in a revolution.

A famous ex-Scotland Yard man, used to political work, was engaged in the task of settling the affair. He was told that, if the letters were genuine, they must be bought back at any price. But they were not genuine—they were cleverly forged. The persons who held them were promptly arrested, and the forgery proved beyond all doubt. The offenders are still in a foreign prison, and are likely to remain there for a long time to come.

This form of post-mortem blackmail is alarmingly on the increase. It has been discovered that people who might be hard to blackmail in their own interests will go to almost any lengths to protect the name of a dead friend or relative, and they are less critical of the matter for which the money

is demanded. Yet, nine times out of ten, such things are the most obvious forgeries or swindles; there again the only way is to go immediately to the police and trust to their discretion to settle the matter without fuss. Everyone should realize that, from the legal viewpoint, the only crime is in trying to extort money; the law will see to it that the documents in question are returned or destroyed, and that the menace is removed without anyone knowing what has happened with the exception of the blackmailed and his or her oppressor.

Recently a new type of blackmail has arisen. Clever advertisements are inserted in newspapers which say discreetly that the advertisers can secretly rid victims of the menace of blackmail. Unfortunates who reply to such advertisements are told that the only way is to have the incriminating documents stolen back again, and offer to carry out such work for a high fee. Once the fee is paid, however, they either extort more on the ground that they, too, know the secret, or else on the ground that the victim has tried to incite them to crime! This sounds too simple a ruse to work, but several times during the last twelve months the police have come across traces of such efforts. The fact is that, when a man or woman is crazed with the fear of blackmail, any payment, however preposterous, is agreed to, and any threat, however absurd, is feared. Unfortunately, the police—who are the only people who are not out for private gain in such an affair—are also the only ones who are instinctively mistrusted.

CHAPTER IV

Society criminals—Youths and girls who try crime for the sake of a thrill—Spongiers; card-sharps; robbers—Varsity girl criminals—Police difficulties in society—Night clubs.

THIS is a branch of crime in which serious outbreaks are sporadic only, but a number of factors combine to make effective police precautions exceedingly difficult. In the first place the motive for crime in society people is nearly always obscure, and consequently it cannot be anticipated. In the case of such felonies as smash-and-grab raids, bank thefts and even murders, the motive is obvious in many cases before anything desperate is attempted; it is perfectly true to say that for every murder committed two are prevented by previous police action. But since practically all society criminals are interested in the psychological thrill of the crime they commit much more than in its tangible results, there is no warning until the thing has happened. The two young millionaires who murdered a boy in America a year or two ago were looked at askance as mental lepers by the whole world when they said they had planned the outrage in order to discover a new sensation; but the same desire has caused most of our famous society swindling, robbing, embezzlement and similar scandals during the last twenty years.

To a considerable degree, of course, this has resulted from the general fraying of nerves that occurred during the war years. The lower and middle classes, always more steady and less nervous, found peace all the panacea they required, but the more highly-strung members of upper

society developed an unhealthy appetite for excitement which will not get back to normal again for a decade or two yet. There is a general opinion that to attribute shop-lifting in a society girl to kleptomania and in a slum girl to an instinct for thieving is unfair; but kleptomania is a definite disease recognized instantly by the medical profession, and it and some form or another of shell-shock have been responsible for almost continual society crime outbreaks since 1918. It is a pity that, when the nation's nerves have become unsettled, the police force has the difficult task of steadyng them again, but there seems no other way out of the difficulty.

Especially in young society people to-day is there an inordinate desire for novelty and thrill. There is a club in a Midland university whose initiation ceremony is the committing of some mild form of excess such as capturing a policeman's helmet; among certain sections of what are commonly termed the Bright Young People all sorts of legal offences, some mere high spirits and some candidly disgusting, are committed, and even staid society bachelors and dowagers are not free from the taint. The trouble is that post-war society, whose only criterion is the rattle of a pocketful of silver, is inextricably riddled with bounders, cads and opportunists who live by their wits, and who are always ready, by means of blackmail or persuasion, to force an unfortunate who has once descended to even a mild crime, to go deeper into the mire. A man who has lent his title to one doubtful prospectus, a girl who for excitement has attended a club of ill-repute or a boy who has gambled beyond his means is usually only too ready to try to extricate himself or herself from veiled threats by doing something far more compromising at the suggestion of the "villain of the piece."

There are thousands of men and girls in Mayfair and

Belgravia as well as in Deauville and Monte Carlo who never do a stroke of work in their lives, have no obvious means of support, but who dress well, never seem short of money and move in what used to be quite exclusive circles. They are the spongers; as definite and difficult a body of criminals as any we have in the land. They scrape an acquaintance with anyone of the opposite sex who has money and a reputation; usually they can dance well, are amusing company, and are charmingly cosmopolitan. Give them the shadow of a chance and they will engineer some sort of compromising situation and thereafter live fatly on the proceeds. They are not blackmailers in the true sense of the word; a small show of opposition will send them elsewhere, and they make no precise demands; they merely live on other people's hospitality in much the same way as won't-works live on the Dole—as if it were their right.

They will force a marriage of convenience for themselves if such a thing is possible, looking on marriage as a ladder up which they can climb, and of which divorce supplies the various rungs. If no other way of levying their "taxes" occurs to them, they will put on their shabbiest suit and turn up uninvited at some important ceremony which is being run by an ex-friend; he then has the choice of "lending them" enough to take to Savile Row or else of having them acting a very efficient skeleton at the feast. It sounds a precarious existence, but I have known cases of this sort who made a bigger annual income, counting all sources, than I did during my police career. The only requirements are a charming presence and an absolute absence of shame.

Such people are usually marvellous card players and billiard players, and augment their incomes by playing Varsity friends for stakes up to a pound a point. Also, they bet a good deal on horses, sometimes with bookmakers who don't exist in reality. But they are always careful of

the real card-sharps who occur in society, and who number in their ranks a few persons of title and importance. These latter are tolerated in much the same way as are the kleptomaniacs; so long as a person is interesting or ornamental, society is willing that he shall occasionally empty its cupboards or its pockets.

No, I am not exaggerating. Two months ago a foreign count took quarters in a big West End hotel, and his charming manners and obvious aristocracy soon gathered around him some of the best-filled purses among the nouveau riches. At his trial, which took place shortly afterwards, he admitted to having made £2,000 in six weeks by card-sharping, and having collected sometimes as much as £500 in one evening from confidence tricks. He had also borrowed to an extent which must have caused quite a little sensation when it was discovered that the money went straight out of England, and that he never intended to pay any of it back.

Actual robberies in society circles are usually carried out by girls whose pretty faces have taken them on to the fringe of society as hostesses, secretaries or in some other capacity. Here the motive—need for more money—is obvious, and consequently the criminals are easier to trace. But, as they usually possess considerable good looks and are very ready to trade on the susceptibilities of their former male associates, even though guilt may be traced to them it is often quite another matter to inflict any punishment. A few crocodile tears and a flashing smile seem to have much more effect on society men than they would have on people of harder grain; and in my own experience it happened two or three times that a proved criminal was forgiven by the very person whom she had robbed (and whom she doubtless would rob again), and the victim refused to lodge a complaint out of a sort of twisted and misguided chivalry!

These girls, who have the access to rooms where valuable jewels and ornaments may be lying about, are more often than not quite ready to use both jewels and chivalry, so that all sorts of unexpected snags are put in the way of the police who try to discover the author of such a robbery.

One of the biggest sources of crime in the more educated classes is that the spread of education has made it a common thing for a man or girl who, fifty years ago, would have been content to hold a business or professional position, to get the fatal feeling that work is not good enough for them, and that they can live just as comfortably in society. Varsity girls with brilliant educational records have on more than one occasion recently, stated in court that they came definitely to the conclusion that they could make more of an income in crime than in business, and that they made their choice with their eyes wide open. I naturally don't mean that society and crime are analogous; but for the girl of talent and knowledge, society is the broad highway to the shadier sort of success.

Perhaps the most fruitful source of police trouble in connection with the upper classes is to be found in what are broadly termed night clubs. Not more than fifty per cent. of these institutions are really night clubs according to the old rendering of the term; some of them do not operate after dark at all. But nearly all of them sell drink at forbidden hours, and many of them sell wines which have paid no duty; a number are used for gambling, while others evade the amusement tax on cabaret shows; and a good many are run for no other purpose than to make money from various candidly immoral sources.

Some are little better than brothels. One such was raided recently, and a good deal of complaint was made because the police officers who discovered it went there in plain clothes to obtain evidence. There is no other way

in which evidence can be got! Is it sensible to suppose that police in full uniform should walk solemnly into the club? These places always have as many emergency exits as a rabbit-hole, and their members are always ready to evacuate the premises.

There are, of course, a number of night clubs which are perfectly innocent in their behaviour. These I am not immediately concerned with, since they give no trouble to the police. But every well-to-do young man and woman in London and a vast number of students who are neither well-to-do nor stable, know the whereabouts of clubs which exist in momentary fear of a police raid. They are frequented by these young people merely out of a desire to boast of having been there; but their habitués are rich abnormals, prostitutes and all the riff-raff of society, and many of the cabaret shows given at such places are so indecent that they would never be tolerated for a moment by right-minded people.

Certain notorious society people constantly appear in court for offences in connection with night clubs, and their punishments are absurdly light. It is ridiculous to say that there is one law for the rich and another for the poor, but in this one particular it is painfully obvious that the rich may flout the law to their heart's content with no heavier reproof than an occasional fine whose amount is absolutely nominal compared with the profits they make. It pays them handsomely to break the law again and again; a poor man generally goes to prison for a long spell at his third offence. The situation is manifestly unfair; it is high time that laws in connection with night clubs should be increased in severity out of all knowledge.

CHAPTER V

Drugs in England—How they are run in—The quickest way to get rich—Adventures with the dope smugglers—Suburbs reeking with cocaine—Careless doctors ; inequalities of drug laws.

IN the heart of Dockland there are a number of tall, blank-looking houses where the worst criminals in the world are bred. The fronts are blind and grimy; the backs perhaps look out across the oily Thames. To the doors of these houses, when dusk falls, lurching, drunken figures creep, and pull at a bell-handle; the echoes answer with a cracked jangle at the back of the house. The door noiselessly opens, the newcomers creep through, and the door shuts furtively. Inside, the visitors stumble along a black passage, down stone steps into what seems to be a cellar; then through a hidden door, up other steps, and into a room, hazy with sickly smoke, lighted by paper lanterns, and with long divans round the walls. There, with a sob of attainment, the newcomers collapse on to vacant divans; one or two vague figures grunt or moan; crackling notes change hands; silent-footed attendants approach with long pipes; someone screams hoarsely; then all is silent again. The House of Dreams. . . .

Another picture. A respectable little red-brick villa in Tooting or Wandsworth, standing in prim complacency over its tiny front garden. The man who has just pressed the electric bell might be a respectable commercial traveller, though if a Yard man saw him there, he would be run to the cells with an anger only with difficulty restrained from violence. The door opens so speedily that it seems that

the occupant of the house must have been waiting just inside; a small packet changes hands, and is paid for in notes, and the man goes quickly away as the door closes. Inside, a haggard-faced woman opening with trembling fingers the tiny package, takes therefrom a minute pinch of white powder, which she sniffs with the epicurean satisfaction of an old snuff-taker; the rest is tucked inside her blouse, and she stretches drowsily on the small, neat settee. The only sound is of the important little clock on the mantelpiece and the woman's rather stertorous breathing. She is an unpleasant sight, but she is too sodden in hectic dreams to care; cocaine has robbed her of her self-respect.

For twenty-four hours out of every twenty-four, the police force is fighting to try to obliterate those ghastly pictures from our national life. But until the present laws concerning the supplying of drugs are made altogether more strict, all the slogging in the world from the mere policeman and detective won't help matters. For the position at present is a deadlock. The plain fact is that the profits on drug-running are such that any man or woman who has no moral distaste of the job finds it a tremendously paying proposition to flout the law, and discount whatever fines and terms of imprisonment may result as an ordinary business debit. A successful drug-runner on a big scale can easily make a profit of £2,000 in a single month, and can—if he is not prevented by imprisonment—become a millionaire in a few years. No fines that can at present be imposed can do more than nibble at his profits; and imprisonment, if his organization is perfected first, is nothing more than a temporary inconvenience. In my opinion and in the opinion of every experienced detective officer in the force, there should be only two forms of punishment for taking part in any way in drug-running; they are a life-sentence and the cat-o'-nine-tails.

Make no mistake; drug-taking is a spreading habit. The restrictions which prevent a chemist from selling cocaine or opium are added to each year. But the chemist is the last man on earth who would so far injure his reputation as to do such a thing; meanwhile the Orientals along the docksides and their agents in suburb and city successfully smuggle tons of cocaine and hundredweights of opium into this country every year. It is not much more difficult to find out where to get a "shot" of cocaine than to draw a ticket in the Irish Sweep; every respectable London district numbers confirmed drug-takers among its best society.

The real dope kings, of whom Brilliant Chang is a notorious example, whose name may not be unfamiliar to my readers, do not usually operate personally in this country. They live in a port like Alexandria or Bombay where a big native population provides at once a sanctuary and an army of helpers, and their orders are conveyed to England by native seamen who are paid for their services by free supplies of their favourite drug. Their principal lieutenants are usually Orientals in London, Cardiff or Liverpool.

In the holds of unseaworthy tramps, deep hidden beneath a legitimate cargo, or possibly ingeniously concealed in the very heart of something obvious like a piece of timber, the drugs are smuggled in. I have known drugs to be pressed into indigestion tablet form and sent, one crate in every seven being packed with them, among a consignment of tablets identical in appearance but composed in the rest of the crates of bismuth and chalk. I was once examining a suspected vessel in the Pool, and after raking over her cargo in vain for an hour, noticed a knot in the woodwork of a bulkhead. That knot I removed with my pocket-knife because its edges were scratched, and inside were packets of belladonna. The stuff is so valuable that a matchbox full of concentrated cocaine or morphia would bring in about

£350 pounds profit, and a Customs official I knew once found some morphia packed inside a consignment of artificial eyes, one of which he accidentally smashed when it slipped from his fingers as he was examining it.

During a raid I made just before I retired from the Force, I called at the luxurious Kensington home of a rich Hindu, and I was promptly threatened in the man's silky treble voice. "I assure you, Inspector, that this will be reported in the proper quarters. I believe that the police constantly make these mistakes, do they not? And occasionally policemen are dismissed for showing too much zeal? Such a pity!"

He sang to another tune before I had finished. One of his boot-heels was a shade higher than the other, and he was very venomous when I mentioned the fact. At first he refused to listen to a suggestion that he should let me examine it, but that at least I did not have to suffer in silence. The heel sounded dully hollow when I tapped it. I could not unscrew it, but I risked cutting it very carefully, and inside was a quantity of white and very bitter powder! In completing my search I found an exquisitely-carved Eastern table, in a crack of the legs of which was a speck of white dust. One of the legs unscrewed (the reverse way from a usual screw, though) and was also hollow and filled with cocaine, in this case the powdered-down variety which is usually sold.

Drugs are hidden in the backs of watches, in eau de Cologne bottles, in baby-powder tins, false-bottomed trunks, fountain-pens—in fact in any conceivable hollow. Sometimes it is sunk in a waterproof bale in a marked spot, and fetched after nightfall by furtive men in boats, pulling muffled oars. There have been two attempts to bring in opium by air via Croydon liners, both of which Customs officials discovered.

Such enormous wages can be paid to all employed in the drug-traffic that it is quite easy to find men of a certain ability and even education who will undertake the task of distributing the drugs all over our great cities. Drug addicts are numbered among tradesmen's wives, City business men, society girls, and also to a lesser extent among that very much to be pitied class who have suffered some nervous trouble or illness and who took to drugs in the first place as a cure for jangled minds. The tragedy of the business is that drug-taking causes a depraved mental state in which the addict's chief joy is to introduce someone else to the fatal stuff; that is how the traffic spreads. I would like to implore anyone and everyone who may read this book never to touch any narcotic drug, no matter what the temptation, except under the orders of a qualified medical man. I have had a long life of police work, and I know that no torture on earth can approach the torture of the confirmed drug-taker, and also that it is impossible to prevent the growth of the habit once it is commenced. It poisons body, brain and soul; an addict is no better than the lowest brute beast, and cure is very difficult and costly.

Doctors who are careless in prescribing narcotics have a great deal to answer for in the way of spreading the drug habit. Every year, two or three doctors appear in various police courts to answer charges of having carelessly or even deliberately supplied dangerous quantities of cocaine or morphia to patients who have developed a craving for such things. The laws concerning dangerous drugs, almost repressively curbing where chemists and shopkeepers are concerned, are lamentably loose in the cases of doctors dispensing their own prescriptions, and even as regards veterinary surgeons who need narcotics for use on animals. The whole legal system about drugs and drug-running needs tightening up, or better still, renewing altogether.

The whole difficulty at present lies not in the detection of cases of illicit drug-taking or supplying but in the inadequate punishments awarded for a crime which I and most others who have had to do with it consider as the equal of cold-blooded and wilful murder.

In the work of prevention, detectives willingly spend days disguised as drink-sodden seamen in the lowest parts of our seaports, they frequent low beer-shops, or patrol for days and nights on end in streets where there is always the chance of a knife in the back. A drug maniac will commit any crime if he fears that his one source of pleasure in life is being threatened, and many a murderous attack has been made on a detective engaged in trying to stop the illicit drug traffic.

There is a personal and almost a vindictive feeling throughout the police force against those who engage in drug-smuggling. The trade is so inhuman, so horrible, so utterly callous that its participants are almost worse than murderers. For the sake of a pocketful of notes, they destroy happiness, health, love, home-life, honour, sanity, even life itself, and not by a single quick, passionate blow, but by slow, torturing, maddening, calculated efforts. There is a universal instinct among policemen and detectives that the only way to make the traffickers feel for their sins is to inflict corporal punishment upon them. This cannot be done at present, although a lot of absolute nonsense is talked by those who know nothing about it concerning "brutalities" to prisoners in police cells. But if ever the "cat" is permitted to be awarded to drug-runners, the police will, I believe, use it in a way which will stamp out the illicit dope trade within a couple of years. That, at least, is what all of us feel about it now.

CHAPTER VI

Prostitution to-day—An increasing source of crime—How it could be stopped—White slavery an actual peril—Women criminals the worst.

MODERN prostitution is the biggest blot on modern Western civilization. We who boast of our progress have permitted conditions in this particular to grow worse every year; there is more prostitution practised now than there has ever been in the previous history of our country. The police are not to blame; here again our law needs sweeping revision. The present system makes it almost impossible for a policeman to bring a successful case against a prostitute unless she plies her trade in a public street where independent evidence can be called. Our parks are deliberately left open every night, and in them it is impossible to find evidence with which to convict the thousands of women who earn money there; every adult knows perfectly well that the number of vagrants who use the parks as a sleeping-place may be numbered in a few dozens per night, whereas in Hyde Park hundreds of obvious prostitutes pass the gates every night.

The parks must all be shut at sundown; the legal punishments for prostitution must be increased till they are on a par with the present punishments for procuration; and the fullest publicity must be given to the names and addresses of all men and women concerned in the loathsome trade. Until these three things are done, prostitution will go on growing and spreading, disease and death will percolate through the whole of our population, and our

most fashionable thoroughfares will remain as full of obvious harlots as any filthy Eastern street.

Fifty per cent. of crime comes back in one way or another to prostitution as its source. Young men are blackmailed for money by harpies with no reputations to lose; old men develop a sort of madness to satiate which they must spend more and more on the whores with whom they consort; jealousy because a woman is too lavish with her charms causes murder after murder; the brothers, fathers and lovers of young girls murder to revenge themselves on old libertines; venereal disease causes thousands of suicides every year; innumerable children die as a result of contamination by it, and family life breaks down as a result in horrible recriminations. Lewd displays are offered in most of our big towns to satisfy unnatural moral appetites; brothels are run wherever it is safe to found them; slum children are more or less driven out on to the streets to bring in money from men; incest and assault are terribly rife all over Great Britain; sexual maniacs commit nearly half our total of murders each year. It is a scarifying list!

At this period of enlightenment by education, casual prostitution resulting in the widespread knowledge of birth control methods is enormously on the increase. The sway of fear which at one time was wielded by various religious bodies has almost entirely vanished; since the War taxation and new teachings together have made marriage less popular; and it has naturally happened that hundreds of thousands of young people who formerly were held back from non-marital relations by fear of consequences have now discovered that their particular objection has been removed. The tightness of moral fibre of Victorian times was not, in all its results, at all a good thing, but it has been succeeded by a laxity which (from a police viewpoint, anyway) is infinitely worse. Every Londoner knows that

Piccadilly, Bond Street, and the whole of the West End is occupied at nights by harlots publicly offering themselves for sale; and unless innumerable police are employed to patrol every few yards of pavement, that state of things will not improve.

Precautions at present exercised to prevent the arrest of innocent people on a charge of prostitution are far too severe. Innocent people can quite easily see to it that they do not loiter along streets after dark, and stare invitingly into the faces of passers-by. They have only to walk smartly to avoid all suspicion. In fact, not more than one or two people are wrongfully arrested on prostitution charges in the whole of the British Isles every year. Under our present laws a number are able to get an innocent verdict in a court, but they only do so by using the laws about independent evidence to their own advantage, and by practising their vamping arts by showing a tearful face to the jurors. So long as the present laws remain, it is often a grave risk for an officer to make a perfectly justifiable arrest which in all probability will bring him judicial and newspaper censure as a result. It is the laws that are at fault, and the laws must be tightened up.

I would like to see prostitution become an offence for which foreign women could be deported on the first conviction. About seventy per cent. of London's prostitutes are Germans, Frenchwomen or Scandinavians; and nearly all the bullies who "farm" them are foreigners. Practically no prostitutes in this country (except occasional amateurs) work for their own profit. Nearly all of them faithfully hand over the wages they earn to men who control them as a managing director controls a business. If we could deport the women and flog the men (though most police officers would rather see the latter hanged!) we should clean our big towns almost entirely in a year.

These men are usually connected with the white slave traffic. A good deal has been written lately about the "myth" of white slavery, and one or two provincial policemen have said that no such thing exists. That, of course, is nonsense. Any experienced detective or police officer will assure you—with records of hundreds of cases to point his arguments—that England is one of the richest hunting-grounds of the white slaver. If weightier evidence is needed, turn over the pages of the report of the special commission set up by the League of Nations to enquire into the problem. Actual figures and sworn statements are given there, taken from reliable police and other sources; it is definitely clear that hundreds of girls every year are spirited out of Great Britain alone to feed the brothels of South America, Germany and France.

The difficulty is to put a stop to the traffic. It is perfectly true to say that violence is not used nowadays to kidnap and carry girls abroad; and the only reason for the lack of it is that we have instituted the "cat" as punishment. That shows how much this form of retribution is feared. The first step is nearly always seduction, or even a glittering marriage. Impressionable young girls are promised all sorts of fineries by foreign—often coloured—agents; mock titles are often flaunted before their eyes; they are taken for jaunts in a showy car; money is spent freely on them. Then they are either persuaded to go abroad voluntarily as mistress to their seducer, or else are inveigled into going through a form of marriage with him. The latter may be a recognized foreign form (though the man may have been married under other names dozens of times before for similar purposes), or it may be a sheer swindle proffered under the name of some sort of foreign marriage. Slum parents are often only too ready to put pressure on their daughters to marry coloured men who

are willing to pay for a new house for the parents—my experience goes to show me that this sort of buying and selling is carried on in England as unashamedly as it is in Bombay or Singapore or Hong-Kong.

Once the misguided girls are out of the reach of British law, their real position is explained to them. If necessary, they are more or less tortured until they agree to work in a brothel, but most of them, seeing only a choice between starvation and fine clothes, excitement and money, are willing enough victims. It must be remembered that, to a girl whose only livelihood in England offers slogging work in a factory, miserable poverty and slum squalor, not much persuasion is necessary when the obvious gains of prostitution or white slavery are offered in exchange.

The girls themselves are the biggest obstacle to effective police prevention of white slaving. Time after time, I have stood at a pier-head and taken an opportunity to ask a girl who is going abroad a ship in company with an obvious slaver whether she will not think things over before committing herself. And time after time I have received a saucy or sneering reply to the effect that my interference was not desired. The trouble is that if these girls go voluntarily and if no actual assault or procuration in connection with an English brothel can be proved, no police action can be taken against the slavers.

The profits of the trade are so enormous that our present penalties, easily avoidable as they are, form no obstacle to the amassing of a vast fortune from the sale of English girls abroad. Particularly in South America and in the Far East are they in demand; from £200 to £500 down is paid for one pretty girl by the brothel-keepers in those places. As travelling expenses are the only things to be entered on the debit side, and no time is wasted in the work, it is possible for an agent to make several thousands

of pounds a year clear profit. And he runs no risk whatever so long as he keeps to methods of persuasion, or uses faked marriage ceremonies said to belong to some fancy religion of his own.

The most active agents in the trade are young Indians and depraved white women. The latter, who have usually been prostitutes themselves and have since turned to the more profitable business of running foreign brothels, are incredibly cunning in their methods, and commit no crime whatever according to our laws when they persuade young girls to go abroad with them for immoral purposes. Knowing their own sex, they are able to use fiendishly clever arguments, and to dangle golden inducements before the eyes of doubters. These women think nothing of making a £50 advance in "wages" to a victim, and they promise anything the latter seems to desire, never meaning to keep their promises. In the end, they pick up a number of girls, recruited perhaps from the ranks of young amateur prostitutes, discontented factory girls and country domestic servants. These they give some sort of quick superficial training in dancing and singing, with the avowed object of taking them abroad to join foreign film companies or stage shows. Often, they deceive the girls themselves as to their real destination; always there are business-like looking contracts to sign and not infrequently expensive clothes to buy, which are supplied by the woman procurer in order that she may have a further hold on her victims. One such trip with a dozen girls might clear a profit of three or four thousand pounds; and after it the criminal keeps away for a year or two while she spends her money, or perhaps while collecting girls from another country.

In white slavery as in prostitution in general, the only cure is to tighten our laws, make deportation easier and punishments heavier. In the whole of modern police work,

there is no more difficult crime to bring home to its perpetrators, and none which is carried on with more flagrant daring. Parents should make the very strictest enquiries before letting their children go abroad in any capacity whatever, and they should be extremely careful of encouraging the attentions of coloured suitors to their daughters' hands. Obviously, all coloured people are not criminals, but they all have ideas of morality, decency and marriage which are fundamentally different from British ideas. To nearly all coloured people, women are chattels of less importance than cattle; and any promises they may make as regards women are not to be relied upon.

There are to-day thousands of English girls in brothels, slums, harems and gutters abroad who could endorse in tears every word I have said about prostitution and white slaving. Nearer home, there are such authorities as the Encyclopædia Britannica, the League of Nations, and all the responsible police officers of the country. The problem is one which shows no promise of real legal improvement for years to come; the only thing that remains is for private precaution to be brought to the highest possible pitch. And in this case, as in the case of blackmail, the slogan—"If you don't know, ask a policeman" is the only safe one to adopt. The police will tell you immediately whether an alien is to be trusted and whether doubtful marriage ceremonies are legal. By finding out such things, you may save yourself a world of heartbreak and someone else a whole life in Hell.

CHAPTER VII

Modern murderers, and their methods—The death penalty the only safeguard—What murderers say about it—Too much leniency dangerous for the public—The Black Cap.

THE modern murderer is a new type which has evolved directly from changing conditions. Until the beginning of this century, murder was committed almost entirely by a low, villainous, brutal kind of man whose temper, always verging on apoplexy, was bound to cause him to kill someone in the long run. This type supplies about five per cent. of our murderers of to-day; five per cent. are people who expect, like Rouse in the famous burnt motor-car case, to get money from their crime, either insurance or otherwise; ten per cent. are thieves of one sort or another who kill when they mean only to disable someone who has interfered with them; thirty per cent. are libertines who want to knock off the unwanted end of the eternal triangle; and the remaining fifty per cent. are sexual maniacs. Of all these, the last-mentioned type is the most dangerous to the community. The others are almost bound to pay the penalty for their crimes, but the sexual lunatic is usually a normal business man, probably a respected husband and kind father, and possibly enough a popular figure among his acquaintances. Only in moments of mental storm is he liable to commit a crime; he is a sort of Jekyll and Hyde whose own mental sufferings are intense beyond description. Such people should be confined in mental homes long before they get to the stage of committing murder; any competent doctor

can tell on examination whether such mental trouble is present, and advise what should be done for it.

When a murder is committed, the thing that above all others spoils the chances of discovering the trail of the murderer is that inquisitive persons crowd around the body. It should be left untouched, and its immediate neighbourhood should be kept clear of trespassers. I have known colleagues of mine who would not miss so small a clue as a single hair come back furious from investigating a murder case and say that the murderer had gained a hundred-to-one chance merely because footprints, finger-prints and everything else had been obscured by the crowding and mauling of morbid lookers-on, before the police were warned at all. Last December a man was sent to the scaffold because of the discovery of a single burnt match, trodden into the mud near a murdered body. Had the match been sunk another quarter-inch into the earth by the careless foot of the spectator who trampled on it, that murderer might have got off scot free.

The methods of modern murderers, clever as they are, become more futile every day as means of deceiving the police and detective forces. Modern chemistry has been brought to such a pitch that no poison can be administered without proclaiming its presence in the murdered body. Analysis in the laboratory, of which I shall speak in detail in my next chapter, can distinguish between human hair and animal hair, can tell from the dust in a man's pockets where he has been in the last twelve hours, can use the soles of his boots, the napp of his hat and the very surface of his clothes in the search for evidence which may hang or liberate him. Each month that goes by sees new discoveries in the science of analysis by chemical reagents; these things admit of no error and are controlled by no human element of doubt; they produce evidence on which

a jury can make an unqualified decision. Meanwhile police organization is improving and spreading, and the public is being educated to co-operate sensibly with the police force. Your modern murderer has usually about one chance in a thousand of getting away unsuspected, and perhaps one in eight hundred of saving his neck.

The latter chance, however, is speedily improving, owing to the efforts of a number of weak-minded persons, mostly clergymen and old maiden ladies, who make a constant agitation in and out of Parliament for the abolition of the death penalty. As far as one can make out, they would as readily pity the cucumber the tortures of the salad, if only someone would start a league to prevent that cruelty. The shadow of the rope is the greatest safeguard of life and quiet in the whole of our civilization.

I have myself come into contact with a good many murderers, and I have talked over the problem of capital punishment with officers and judges of greater experience than myself. The result is a dispassionate and unhesitating certainty that murderers are more harmful and useless to humanity than locusts, and that anyone who is cajoled into signing a reprieve petition or supporting a movement for the abolition of the death sentence is actively menacing our national safety.

From my own work in the Special Department I have come to the conclusion that, if hanging were abolished, there is not one of our major politicians who could walk in safety from his London lodgings to the House of Commons. Ireland has shown what the assassin can do; school-children have been sniped in the streets, old women shot through the windows of their dwellings, diplomats riddled with bullets in broad daylight—and all because a political minority thought that terrorism would serve to gain a forced turn-over of votes. In America, just because

it is a known and accepted fact that a gangster is never sent to the electric chair, machine-guns and revolvers are liable to spatter death abroad in the heart of any city at any time. Only in England, where an unbribable law fearlessly orders and carries out sentence of death on those who murder their fellows, are we free from baby-kidnapping, tortures and political or gangster mass slaughter. If the death penalty were removed to-morrow, London would be full of heavily-armed gangsters a week later, and probably half the Cabinet would be lying dead in the streets.

Let us take one or two recent murder cases to show what kind of man it is that we are considering. George Joseph Smith, to obtain the insurance money due on several women, drowned them in his bath by pulling their legs so that the head was held under water until the victim suffocated. Charles Fox slowly poisoned his own mother. Frederick Bywaters broke up what had been a happy home, and persuaded a wife to help murder her husband. Browne and Kennedy brutally murdered a policeman who had shown no hint of violence towards them. Rouse picked up an unknown man who was walking inoffensively by the roadside, offered him a lift in a car, stunned him and cold-bloodedly set fire to him while he was unconscious after soaking his clothes with petrol, just for the sake of deceiving a number of girls with whom he had been philandering. What possible good purpose could have been served by burdening the taxpayer (and remember it is the taxpayer who is asked to dole out his earnings to keep these foul murderers) with the care of such inhuman fiends as these? And such crimes would increase tenfold the moment that the death penalty is abolished.

Idealists say that human nature is all good, and that criminals are merely suffering from an obscure disease,

and should therefore be pitied and cosseted by the rest of us. Idealists, unfortunately, know nothing whatever of the criminals they talk so glibly about; they have never talked to them, moved among and studied them as I have done. They do not know that murderers are people of incredibly callous, cool, calculating wickedness; that they would knife and burn the idealists to gain a few pounds or to possess themselves of their wives. They have not met such individuals as Neil Cream, who was executed for poisoning several women with strychnine solely in order that he might enjoy watching their dying agonies under that cruellest of all awful poisons. It is one thing to talk glibly about keeping this kind of monster alive, and quite another to ask you and me to pay taxes in order that he shall be given food and comfortable lodging in a state asylum.

We are crippled enough already with expenses in connection with criminals who must legally be imprisoned. For those abnormals who murder little girls, who lighten adultery by poisoning an unwanted wife or husband, who kill mothers or sisters for a few paltry pounds insurance or who club women and burn their bodies because it is going to be too much trouble to pay them a paternity allowance—well, hanging is too good for them, but it is all we can do. Our Judges are the best in the world; we can safely leave to them any exercise of mercy that is really necessary.

Murderers themselves are usually as callous about their own death as they are over the death of their victim. It is a definite fact that condemned men almost always make an excellent meal on their last morning alive; not infrequently they joke with the warders, and occasionally they attempt to strike an attitude while the rope is actually being fastened round their neck. Nearly all murderers

seem to suffer from a morbid appetite for publicity; many of them try to send messages to all sorts of persons with whom they have no concern, and though all messages are faithfully taken down and passed on when there is a shadow of sanity in the request, it is not usual to send them unnecessarily to such people as the Home Secretary, the Archbishop of Canterbury or the King.

It is rather a curious fact that while there is such carelessness shown by the men who suffer the death penalty, humanitarians outside never cease from agitating that a more humane method of execution is desirable in this country. Actually, hanging is as speedy and practical as any form of death in existence, and is, I believe, much more immediately effective than the electric chair. In America a number of new execution methods have been tried in various States, but none of them have met with real success. Apart from "the chair," men have been officially executed by means of released prussic acid gas and by various other devices, but all of them necessitate more of the theatrical display which causes so many objections than does our own method of hanging.

In the latter, there is no possibility of faulty mechanism, nor of the human element upsetting arrangements, as has happened occasionally in America when individuals with peculiarities of physical construction have not suffered anything more than severe shock at the passage of the execution voltage through their bodies. Hanging is humane, simple, cheap and efficient, and it is certainly vitally necessary as a way to eliminate wastage from the mass of humanity.

The only thing about a murder trial or execution that seems to awe prisoners is the donning of the Black Cap. This also has come in for its share of objections, on the ground that it is a form of needless terrorism. Yet it is

not entirely needless; I was told on one occasion by a political prisoner who was captured while threatening a policeman with the menace of a loaded revolver, that the thought of the Black Cap had been the only thing that had kept him from shooting. Other detective officers have told me of similar experiences; I should say that the intangible psychological fear of this awesome piece of legal uniform saves Great Britain five or six murder cases each year. Even the humanitarians surely cannot object to that.

CHAPTER VIII

The Chemistry of Modern Police Work—Test-tubes more feared than handcuffs—Hanged by a pinch of dust—Analysis wonders in peace and war.

WHEN a man stands in the dock on trial for his life, attacked and defended by the most famous counsels in the world, the evidence he fears most is the evidence of the test-tube. Half a gill of coloured liquid which has turned red when it should have turned blue, or which has thrown out an almost imperceptible deposit of rusty red dust to sink to the bottom of the tube can do more to fasten the rope round his neck than all the incisive arguments of Public Prosecutor or highly feed Counsel for the Crown.

When a man is arrested for murder the first thing the police do is to make a microscopic examination of his clothes for bloodstains. But these are not the only evidence sought. Grease-marks, grass-stains, particles of dust, hay-seeds, a single thread of cotton, the very mud on the prisoner's boots may hang him. Often, suspected men fight fiercely in the police station to retain possession of articles of clothing on which suspicious marks may be found.

A red mark on the clothing may have been caused by rust, dried blood, paint or any one of half a dozen other things. But there is an infallible chemical test for the presence of blood, and any chemist will prove to you how a solution of one part of blood to five hundred parts of water or any other solvent or mixture is still strong enough

to give a clear result when a drop of the reagent is placed with the suspected mixture. No other substance except blood can give the same reaction; and even if blood is weeks old and the stain is dry and faded, the reaction is the same.

Moreover, the blood of human beings is divided by chemistry into various classes, no two of which give the same result with a reagent. Consequently, although it cannot yet be said with certainty that a given sample of blood belongs to any definite person (this test will probably be discovered in a couple of years or so), yet the analyst can tell whether the sample is of the same class of blood as that of the victim, as Sir Bernard Spilsbury has often proved in court in the last few years. Again, if the victim suffers from any one of half a dozen fairly common diseases, the presence of the disease bacteria can be ascertained in the sample of blood being tested, and the probability is still further narrowed down. And a blood test will show where a bloodstain has been even when the murderer has attempted to clean off the mark with petrol or some similar solvent, for the texture of cloth retains minute quantities of blood almost indefinitely against all efforts to cleanse it.

In a case in which I was interested a year or two ago, a watchman in an ironworks was murdered while on night duty. Nothing was taken from the works; there was no apparent motive for the crime, and for about a month no arrests were made. And then two men were detained in a town about eighty miles from the scene of the outrage. Both swore that they had not been near an ironworks for months, and one said that he had never been inside one in his life. In examining his clothing, however, the turn-up of his trouser-legs were tested with a powerful magnet, and a considerable quantity of minute metallic particles always to be found in the dusty air of an ironworks were

revealed. The man was faced with this evidence, and in a spasm of fear he broke down and admitted that he had been present when the murder was done, said that it was a crime of revenge, and blamed his mate for the actual deed. Both men were proved guilty and subsequently hanged.

When poisoning is suspected, an analysis is made of the lungs, stomach and entrails of the murdered, and the results stated in court. Nearly all the deadly alkaloids, such as strychnine, nux vomica, arsenic, morphia and belladonna, are what are called cumulative poisons; that is, they are not easily passed from the system, and are apt to stay in the body for weeks after they are administered. After death, they will remain indefinitely; a body that has been buried would show alkaloid traces among its dust long after it had entirely decomposed. The very tiniest traces of most poisons of this type give each its absolutely individual reaction; and after an hour or two with flame tests, reagents and electrolysis examinations, the matter of whether the dead body contains an undue quantity of poison can be ascertained without the least possibility of error. Poisons such as those I have named are commonly given in medicinal form as tonics, but it is always possible to tell whether the medical dosage has been exceeded, even though there may only have been the merest fraction of a grain in the correct dose, it can be traced and its quantity computed by analysis of the vital organs.

On the medical rather than the purely chemical side, a police doctor can tell to within half an hour or so how long life has been extinct in a murdered body, and nearly always he knows how death was caused. In recent crimes, there have been several efforts to lay a false trail by clubbing or otherwise marking a murdered person, whose death has been caused by a vegetable poison, and perhaps committing robbery on the body, in order that the police may be led

to believe that a thief has been responsible for the outrage, and that an analysis of the organs shall not take place. This is mere clumsiness on the part of the criminal; no experienced policeman is satisfied with the intentionally obvious.

The analysis and microscopic testing of shoes gives some remarkable results, as once more has been shown us by Sir Bernard Spilsbury's evidence. Criminals who meticulously clean their clothes after a crime often forget that a boot or shoe, even after it is washed, often retains infinitely small grains of dust, grit or powder, and that these can cry aloud in the laboratory concerning the guilt or innocence of the person on whose footgear they are found. To take a crude instance, a murder may have been committed in a wood where the soil is black and rich. When the shoe is examined, there may be found among the traces of this leaf mould one or two crumbs, then marks of brown clay, and finally stains of greasy black over the clay. The youngest constable in the Force could tell that the owner had first been in a wood, then been in the vicinity of food, had walked across a clayey field, and had finally polished the shoes to remove all traces of the journeys. If the man, in order to prove an alibi, then stated that he had been ill in bed for a day or two previously, he would find himself in a nasty position when he got into the dock.

One single hair found near the scene of a crime may perhaps identify the murderer; while dust discovered in the hair of a suspected man may show whether he has recently been in the neighbourhood of any particular kind of soil, whether he has been near a hayfield or in a street, if he has been in a factory or mill, or it may even point to his having recently been engaged in a struggle. Flour, metal-dust, road grit, the powdery dust of a dry ploughed field, hayseeds, all tell their tale under a microscope; hair which is broken off short and has not a full root attached

to it has been torn out, while that with a shrivelled root has fallen from a head which inclines to baldness. Colouring stain, hair oil or tonic are identifiable with chemical reagents. Again, hair shows quite distinctly the race of the man to whom it has belonged. The hair of a negroid type is flat in section and closely curly in growth; a white man's hair is oval in section and straighter or wavier than the negroid; while a yellow man's hair is quite round in section, straight and more coarse in texture than that of the other races.

The way in which the evidence of fingerprints is used in police work is perhaps better known to the public than the uses of analysis. The print of every dangerous criminal who passes through police hands is taken and kept in the European police records. The method is simply that the marker presses his thumb-ball on to a paper on which a little powder is spread, and the record is then photographed. As no two people in the world have exactly the same thumb-print, the maker can always afterwards be identified. Foreign police forces also take thumb-prints; and in this matter all police forces collaborate if evidence is needed about a specific criminal.

When a crime has been committed, the first tests are always for thumb or finger-prints. A sensitive powder is dusted over places where hands might have touched the body, or over places in the vicinity where marks might have been left. The prints show under the powder because the moisture from the human hand leaves a slightly greasy impression wherever it touched. The excess powder is then gently blown away, and the marks themselves are left clear for the photographer, for the powder sticks to their outline and details. Comparison is then made first with our print records at the Yard and then with the prints of any suspected person's hands.

Two years ago an old man and his wife who kept a little oil-shop in Deptford were murdered in their sleep, and the cash-box of the shop rifled. After a good deal of searching, two youths were arrested. When they stood in the dock they denied all connection with the crime, and were mildly sarcastic in their replies. Then, however, the cash-box was produced in court, and it had a microscope mounted over it. The counsel for the defence, who had, in a biting speech, pulled to bits every scrap of former evidence against his clients, turned away with a hopeless gesture from the half-convinced jury. The finger-prints on the edges of the box were identical with those of the murderers.

As all chemists know, nearly all trades—as apart from professions—leave a definite mark on those who engage in them. In forgotten folds of clothing, in the hair or under the finger-nails, under a hat-band or even in the texture of clothing itself, may be found particles of dust which show a man to have worked or been in a mill, a cement-factory, or perhaps a mother-of-pearl mill. A coal miner has coal-dust in his clothing, under his armpits and in his lungs; sawdust betrays the carpenter or woodworker; while the slaughterer cannot claim that a human bloodstain on his clothing has been caused in his work because human blood gives different reactions from those produced in the test-tube when animal blood is tested.

I have said something in former chapters about the work of the analyst in testing suspected letters for the secret writing of spies. Here again definite reagents cause the chemicals used by the spies to change colour and become visible, just as in photography the application of various solutions causes the silver salts with which paper or plates are impregnated to darken in relation to the amount of light which has been admitted to them. Secret messages are brought to light in peace time as well as in war by the

Yard, for it frequently happens that information about robberies and similar illegal matters are conveyed from one crook to another by this means, between the lines of an ordinary and apparently innocent letter. In peace time, however, there is no censorship department to aid us, and we may only examine suspected letters if we have very considerable proof beforehand that the writer is apparently guilty of a major breach of the law, and is using the post with further criminal intent.

More and more each year does science lend its aid to police work, in one direction or another; and it really seems as if we may in time come to a stage when there will be a few hundred specialist analysts employed by the Yard and only about half the present total of policemen.

CHAPTER IX

The Force as a Career—I was a Public School man on joining—the Yard wants brains as well as brawn—Policemen who get £1,000 a year—The private detective business—How brains have helped the Yard—Latest methods of crime detection.

THE personnel of the police force has been changing during the last twenty years or so, and vastly improving. There was once a time when a policeman was looked upon by most people as a sort of official bully, under whose inquisitorial eye the most innocent had need to quail. Now, I think it would be more correct to say, the policeman is everybody's friend, courteous, courageous, helpful, ready to serve the community as a whole or any individual of it, from the wealthiest to the least influential. There are to-day in the ranks of the ordinary constables and detective-constables numbers of young college men who realize that the Force offers one of the best careers of the whole modern business world.

I myself found my career a reasonably profitable and pleasant one, and I started with expectations not too easy to satisfy. I began in the Durban Police, Natal and the Johannesburg Police, and, before I was twenty-five, I was offered a responsible and remunerative position in the Diamond Fields Police at Johannesburg. Had I joined that body I should have had a chance to rise to a position in which I should have earned several thousands a year. But I was ambitious to try my luck with the famous Criminal Investigation Department of Scotland Yard, and so I came to London. It is a proof that opportunities were not lacking

that I could safely afford to turn down the South African offer. I had a fluent knowledge of several languages, a public school education and a good physique; I received one or two offers to go into business, but those also I thought inferior to a chance at the Yard. I have had no reason to regret my optimism. Due to my knowledge of languages, I was put into the Special Department; I have told in my chapters on anarchism and espionage how necessary it was for me to be somewhat of a linguist. Also, during my career, I have had to escort British royalties abroad and foreign notabilities and royalties here, and knowledge of languages served me then, too, while my general education enabled me to be at ease when my duties took me to royal receptions, or when I was showing the sights of London to a royal visitor.

If your son wants a really interesting career, which will not keep him entirely enslaved to an office stool and which will supply excitement, a good salary, sound companions, a healthy life and plenty of chances to make a mark for himself, then suggest to him that he gives the Force a thought. There is room in it for men of all sorts of education. The country boy who might otherwise be a carpenter or even a farm-labourer for lack of opportunity to do better can become a constable, grade up to a sergeant, and earn enough to live very comfortably, own a little car and be to some extent his own master. He will have his house and uniform supplied, he may get an allowance on his car expenses and telephone, and he is sure of a pension afterwards. Also, he can retire while he is still young enough to enjoy his ease. He should apply to the nearest police station for particulars of the entrance examination, required physical tests and so on; a good physique and fair measurements are essential.

For the lad who has had, perhaps, a secondary school

or public school education, the chances are even better, though of course there is no reason why a boy should not rise from the desk of an elementary school to control Scotland Yard as one of the Big Five, granted that he is willing to educate himself and put his back into the job of making good. Everyone has to start at the bottom, even the man from the University, so chances are so far even. But the novice can mark out from the beginning any one of a couple of dozen specialized branches of police work, and try to get to the head of the branch he chooses. The Special Department needs men of tact, physique and special education; the C.I.D. generally wants people of keen analytical mind, wide vision, organizing power, quick thought and considerable learning; the Force from John o' Groat's to Land's End needs Inspectors and Superintendents in all the big towns; engineers are needed for the Flying Squad and for police radio; chemists are wanted for analysis and microscopic work; the photographic and finger-print records need clerks and librarians; in fact there are all kinds of alternatives between which the beginner may choose and towards success in one of which he should aim.

After leaving the Force the policeman is not left, as are men from so many other jobs, with nothing obvious to turn to in case of financial stress, or if he feels disinclined for inactivity. For every grade of policeman there is open some sort of career afterwards; the constable can find himself a comfortable and trusted position as caretaker, commissionaire or groundsman to a good sports club; other grades can take positions commanding bigger salaries or start in some career of their own. I myself commenced a private detective agency on my retirement, and it has supplied me with some cases quite as interesting and naturally even more lucrative than did my actual official police

work. In that, too, I have specialized, as specialization seems more profitable; I undertake certain semi-official Government and similar investigations in which my former experience in the Special Department helps me.

The important factors to make a success of a private agency are discretion, confidence, connection with organizations in other countries, and absolutely reliable and discreet representatives. The modern detective, whether private agency man or official policeman, is as unlike Sherlock Holmes as can possibly be imagined. He is not a super-man; if he were, he would drift inevitably towards the Stock Exchange or else found a great new business, and certainly speedily become a millionaire. He must have a knowledge of human nature so as to be able to judge in advance what persons are likely to do and whether they are telling the truth (half one's difficulties occur because people who seek help withhold or misstate certain facts for personal reasons or out of excitement). He must have ordinary intelligence, a healthy body and mind, plenty of common sense, a keen power of observation even of the tiniest details, ability to gain and hold confidence, resourcefulness, persistence, a tireless capacity for work, a suspicious nature and, preferably, an element of luck in his make-up. Then he may well rise to draw a couple of thousand a year.

Brains have helped Scotland Yard and raised the task of criminal investigation to something a lot more skilful and perfected than anything shown in books or on the stage. In my last chapter I said something about the chemistry of police work; other modern inventions such as fast motor-cars and radio have played their part also. Radio, for instance, makes it virtually impossible for a criminal to escape from England abroad; he may get on a boat, but we can wireless the vessel and also wireless a request to her destination to collect and return the guilty

man when he attempts to land. The telephone, which is now fitted to nearly every police station in the British Isles, makes it possible for the description of a wanted man to be circulated all over the country in an hour or so, and for reports to come in from great distances concerning suspicions or arrests. Even aeroplanes may be used when it is necessary to move police officers from one place to another with the utmost speed.

In connection with police work also, doctors and pathologists are retained, and on the police surgeon's evidence many an important case is decided. This is a sideline which offers great possibilities for a clever man, and certain people such as Sir Bernard Spilsbury become known to the general public almost solely through their work in connection with the Force.

Radio is an increasing power in the prevention and detection of crime. Inventions are always being tested and some are adopted; in the future, the criminal will fear the crackling of radio quite as much as he now worries about the echo of the official foot on the pavement. The Flying Squad, too, is being constantly improved, and becomes daily a greater menace to the law-breaking classes.

Inventors who have in mind any important improvement in radio or any other method which can be applied to crime detection and prevention would be well advised to try the Commissioner of Police before turning over their ideas for entirely commercial uses. It sometimes happens that police use of a patent does not affect its commercial patents; but the Yard is always ready to pay generously for useful inventions and ideas, and is often instrumental in passing on other rights of them to the military, naval and civil authorities, with great advantages to the inventor.

CHAPTER X

Unsolved Mysteries of the Yard—Murderers who are never found—Why they escape—Organization needs—Keeping the Force's integrity—Temptations of a policeman.

THE average number of murders for which no one is ever condemned is something like a dozen a year in Great Britain. In France it is over thirty; in Germany about forty-five; in the United States over four hundred. There is in all the world no country with anything approaching the number of our own population which allows as few murderers to escape as we do. And even of our dozen, the Yard always feels that it has arrested two or three who have escaped punishment through the brilliance of a clever counsel, and that it knows the identity of three or four more who cannot even be arrested because, although there is plenty of circumstantial evidence and everything points to the guilt of the man we suspect, there is not enough proof to bring a case against him.

Most of the unsolved mysteries of British crime, whether in cases of murder or otherwise, are caused because of amateur interference or reluctance and delay in calling in the police. If a relation were dying of typhus, nothing would be forgotten in the race to bring a doctor; but if the same man had been knifed in his bed or had died of arsenic poisoning, everyone connected with him would turn pale at the suggestion of ringing up the nearest police station. Superintendent Wensley once said to me that every minute between the time a murder was committed and when it was discovered gave the murderer one extra chance of

escape, and that if a body could be kept hidden for three or four days, there would be only the remotest chance of detection of the slayer.

Also, the trespassing of unofficial persons near the body and on the scene of the crime makes detection harder. If every clue is left untrampled and untouched, it is a simple task to collect vital evidence. But one curious or sentimental sightseer may destroy, with a couple of steps or the slightest movement of the body, all chance of making a speedy arrest. In a Yorkshire stabbing case two years ago, a stupid fellow who believed himself a local Nelson Lee pulled a tiny dagger out of the body of a murdered man who was no relation or connection of his, and in consequence all efforts to find clues were baffled. The murderer was never discovered, but about eight months later, a famous Detective Inspector in the North, thinking over the facts of the case, hit on the possibility that the dagger, instead of having been driven in by hand, might have been fired from a gun. Had it not been dragged out when the constable arrived, he would have noted whether the clothing round the hilt was at all screwed by the twisting projectile; had it been twisted at all, that would have suggested the Inspector's theory eight months earlier, and other clues, which seemed meaningless at the time, would have fitted into place like pieces of a jig-saw puzzle, and would probably have led to an arrest.

One important factor in favour of the criminal at the moment is that our police force as a whole is not properly organized. It happens frequently enough that a murder or other big crime is committed in some distant part of the provinces, and that the local police, after exercising all their undoubted zeal, energy and skill, call in aid from the Yard when the trail has long grown cold. I have nothing but admiration for the provincial policeman and detective;

they are smart men, and they are quite capable of discomforting the majority of criminals who operate in their district. But it constantly happens that a case presents unusual and puzzling features—that the clues which a detective of long and varied London and C.I.D. experience might find enlightening do not bear the same message for the man who has never met a similar case before. Provincial men have not the same access to libraries of general and criminal information; and they have not usually such widespread and autocratic powers as are wielded by a detective from headquarters.

In America we see the very faults of which I complain, and there they are carried to an absurd pitch. A criminal has merely to slip over the border of the state in which he "did his job" into another state with different laws, independent police organization and perhaps somewhat jealous officials, and weeks may be lost before suitable adjustments can be made to fit together the grating edges of the respective police systems. The murder of the Lindbergh baby is somewhat of a case in point. In England, of course, things are not nearly as bad as this, but unless drastic alterations are made, they may yet become so. As more and more competent officers are placed all over the provinces, they naturally feel confident that they can settle their own troubles themselves, and are disinclined to incur the expense and the local disapprobation of "calling in the Yard." People are apt to grumble that, if they pay for a local police service, they don't want all the big jobs done by Londoners!

This trouble will never be eliminated until an expert central board of detective officers is created, and is given absolute control of all such decisions. Just as, during the War, too many cooks made a mess of things until Marshal Foch was given supreme control, so it will be in police

work until such a board is in existence. Cornwall, Aberdeen or Glamorganshire should have experts instantly a crime has been committed in their borders, just as would happen in the Strand or Piccadilly. In murder cases, at least, the safety of the community demands that an officer should be sent from the Yard at once, and that he should collaborate with the local men, giving them his experience in return for their knowledge of the place and its people. Local patriotism and jealousy, the chance of injuring a reputation by letting a big case be handed over to a London man just when the clues seem to be working out, the possible cock-sureness of the specialist who is only called in as a last resource—all these things are like grit clogging the efficiency and smoothness of the great machine which should grind to powder every one of the criminal's chances. The grit must be removed and the machine overhauled, oiled and put in charge of competent central operators.

Already police work has become such a matter of specialization that there are certain detectives who are noted as murder detection experts, others who specialize on the arrest of bank thieves, and so on. I see no reason why, in time, each rising man should not be specially trained for one such sideline, and given opportunity to perfect himself in that alone. After all, most crooks specialize in one form of crime; we shall always be rather at a disadvantage while each detective tries to cover every single line which any clever criminal can choose. It is like asking a good all-round runner to pit himself against the holder of the world's hundred yards championship; it is better to train a suitable runner specially to contest each title.

Undoubtedly the finest thing about our police force is its integrity. If that goes, the whole organization might as well be scrapped. I don't want to criticize the United

States unduly, but to English eyes their police system seems rife with bribery and corruption. Here, on the other hand, not one man in a thousand in the Force would take even the slightest bribe and allow it to deflect him from his duty. This state of things must be jealously preserved. The essential watchword of all police work is public service; as soon as individual profit is allowed to creep in, justice will be disarmed, her scales weighted and her bandage rendered transparent while her pockets are loaded with gold.

The first thing necessary to preserve is to keep police salaries at a reasonable level. They are quite satisfactory at present, but if prices rise or any alteration takes place which makes the policeman receive what is only a bare living wage, corruption will creep in. For there are plenty of temptations. In a recent arrest of a famous public man for a very despicable crime, it may be remembered that he offered to make the man who arrested him independent for life if he would release him before getting to the police station. That sort of thing is not nearly so unusual as it sounds. I was once offered a heavy bag of gold nuggets when I arrested a man in South Africa on a charge of murder. A young policeman recently who was concerned in a night club raid was offered a thousand pounds merely to tone down what he had seen at the club. To that man, such a sum would have exceeded four years' wages, and no one would have known that he had accepted it. He gained nothing by refusing the offer; yet, in a like position, hardly any of our constables would have accepted it. That is the spirit we must keep up in the Force.

Much of it, of course, is sheer esprit de corps. There, also, the public can help. Many of the older policemen to-day have a sort of mild obsession that the blue uniform is despised by the public, and that there is a universal idea

that a policeman is a kind of low, untrustworthy, paid tyrant. I am certain that this idea is groundless, but you could not go into one police station in any of our big towns without finding several of the men there possessed by it. Surely the public can show their appreciation of the tireless vigilance, the unbribable honesty and the courageous and courteous service of the police in a more convincing way than at present, if the present method has such misleading results.

They can also co-operate in not offering tips to policemen. I know that a half-crown offered for some small personal service, such as keeping an eye on a car that has been left, seems only a just return, and gives the donor as much pleasure as the constable. That is not the point. In fact it is one of the items which makes that curious "inferiority complex" in policemen. They know you would not tip the owner of another car who pulled up on seeing you in difficulties and gave you a hand; you only tip your social inferiors. Try to help the "bobby" to feel that you don't necessarily consider him an inferior. Give him the thanks you would give any other man who helped you; if you are a girl, throw in a smile as well, because the Force is notably tender-hearted; but keep your money in your pocket.

That is the only way to stop the tipping habit from extending till it becomes actual bribery. If you create the sort of policeman who is sullen unless you sweeten him with a coin or two, you have only yourself to thank if he accepts the notes offered him by the man who means to burgle your house. No amount of money can ever buy the service that is given when mutual respect exists.

Fortunately, at present, influence means nothing in the career of a policeman. If the Chief Constable's son were to join to-morrow, he would start as an ordinary constable,

at a constable's pay, and with all the hard work and all the unpleasant jobs before him that usually fall to the lot of an unknown recruit. At no period of his climb towards success would name, relatives or money help him one jot. That is a state of things which must be religiously preserved. As soon as the Force becomes a rubbish-tip for unwanted younger sons and wastrel nephews, as happens now in certain famous continental police forces, the morale and esprit de corps will cease to be. And in such a case, the organization which is at present more feared than anything else in the whole world by those criminals whose nefarious enterprises bring them to Great Britain would lose its power, and become an active menace to our national security. For a police force gone to seed could spread the weeds of injustice, oppression and coercion to such an extent that personal and commercial safety might alike be choked.

CHAPTER XI

Some Royalties I have met—King Edward and the wine-butler—Prince Olaf sees the sights of London—Some good royal stories.

IHAVE said a good deal about specialization in police work, and I think my story would be incomplete without a very brief record of some of the adventures I met with in the line in which I specialized just before the War—that of acting as personal police guard to various royalties of our own and other countries. I hope no one will feel that the stories are evidence of *lèse majesté*—if so, the fault will be in my telling, not in the material. For, in common with all other police officers I know who have been in personal contact with members of our Royal Family, I have found them sympathetic, extraordinarily human, ready to enjoy or to crack a good joke, but always possessing that sense of dignity and responsibility which has made the King so universally beloved.

Several of my memories concern King Edward. Usually his eyes had a kindly twinkle in them, but I remember one afternoon, the first time that I was given the duty of guarding him, when they were dark and overhung by frowning brows. I was standing just outside the gates of Sandringham Hall when the King came striding down the drive, lost in thought. Noticing me standing there, he pulled up abruptly and asked very gruffly what I was doing there.

“Looking after your Majesty’s safety,” I replied.

The King laughed. “Well,” he said, “I’m just going for a stroll. You’d better come along with me.”

We went down together, chatting on a variety of subjects. As we turned into the gates again the King said to me: "I suppose you'd like a drink after this dusty walk? Go round to the wine-butler—but, damn it! I expect you've been there before!"

On another occasion when the King went to Paris, I was told to attend him there, as at that time anarchist assassins were busy in the French capital. I was given strict orders never to allow King Edward out of my sight so long as he was in the streets; but one day, as I was following him at a discreet distance, he suddenly signalled to a passing car driven by a French Count who was a great friend of his. I was ready for some such emergency, and immediately signalled a fast police car which had been crawling along a hundred yards in my rear. As the King jumped in, I got into our car and set off, meaning to keep as nearly out of sight as possible. I did not realize how easy it would be to lose my quarry altogether! The King had climbed into the seat beside the driver, and the car went away like a flash. For about seven or eight miles it was absolutely all we could do to keep in sight of the long, torpedo-shaped racer ahead, which fled along the straight stretches, and vanished round corners as if a racing motorist were driving her. At last, she pulled up as suddenly as she had started, and the King beckoned to us to come up as we tried to keep out of sight behind. I wondered as we drove up whether King Edward would be annoyed at our having carried out our instructions, but instead of that he was smiling.

"I had a bet with Count de —," he said, "that we could run away from you. I'm afraid he's won. I must congratulate you on your driving. He'll go slow now. Lucky for him he is not a criminal!"

Continental royalties have figured in a number of amusing

stories and adventures, but none more unusual, I think, than the following. A friend and colleague of mine in the Special Department, who has since risen to some fame, was deputed to guard a certain foreign ruler who was visiting London. At the end of the visit the royal personage called him to his private room, made a polished speech of thanks, and finally pinned to his jacket the insignia of one of the most famous Continental orders. The badge was a blazing design in precious stones, and when my friend reached home that day, he had another look at it. The stones looked to him to be somewhat doubtful, and in the end he took the badge, which should have been worth about £2,000 to a Bond Street jeweller to have it examined. It was worth about thirty shillings; the "jewels" were all paste. What story lay behind the presentation—whether the badge was given in honest error or otherwise, and why it was composed of paste stones—no one ever knew. My friend exchanged it for cash, and with the money bought an exceedingly fine briar pipe, which he still has.

A typical Scots story concerns Lord Curzon, whom I saw when I was attending a royal shooting party in Cheshire. After the first day, on which he got a splendid "bag," Lord Curzon went straight to the telephone and rang up a local fishmonger. "I've a number of grouse to sell," he said, "and I'd like to know what you can offer for them." The result was quite a satisfactory sale, and Lord Curzon came beaming back to the rest of the company.

When Prince Olaf of Norway was in London just after the War he was most anxious to see the sights of the city, not as a royal visitor but in the way that an ordinary tourist would see them. I took him all over the place by 'bus and tube; we visited the Abbey, St. Paul's, the National Gallery, Tate Gallery, the South Kensington and British Museums, and climbed the Monument.

I once was given a very strange royal commission. Queen Alexandra had received from an old lady in the East End of London a pathetic appeal for help in the purchase of a mangle. The writer was taking in washing in order to augment a tiny income, but could not afford the mangle with which to wring the clothes. These letters for charitable help are sometimes anarchist traps (a Russian Prince, just before the War, was shot when he went in person to answer one such request), so I was deputed to go and find out whether everything was in order, and, if so, to see to the delivery of the mangle. The old lady was genuine enough, and seemed much more excited to hear that the Queen had herself read the application than even at the thought of having her request granted. A modern and expensive mangle was duly delivered, and the Queen sent a personal note to accompany it. I don't think the East End has ever held a prouder old lady than that one was when she opened the note!

Just before the War, at a reception when the Queen of Spain (then Princess Ena) and Princess Beatrice were receiving a number of guests at their London residence, I was mistaken for a guest, and the footmen at the door demanded my name. I shook my head, and whispered that I was the royal detective, but the men suspected something in the way of a gate-crasher, I suppose, and only demanded my name with more persistence and in a louder voice. In order to avoid causing a commotion, I said simply "Mr. Fitch," and was reluctantly allowed to pass as the name was loudly announced. Princess Beatrice saved the situation by realizing in a moment what had happened; she shook hands with me as if I were an ordinary guest, gave me a friendly smile, and I passed safely in.

When King Edward was attending a royal performance of a Forbes-Robertson play at the Court Theatre in Sloane

Square, at a time when there had been a number of anarchist meetings recently held in London, it was thought for a moment that an attempt had been made on his life. In the middle of the play there was a crashing explosion, clouds of dust and smoke went up, and all the theatre lights went out. Temporary lights were immediately brought in, and King Edward stood conspicuously up in the front of his box in order to prevent a panic among the people. When we went round to him a minute or two afterwards, however, it having been discovered that the cause of the fault was a failure in the lighting, he was nowhere to be found. After a minute or two of feverish search he was discovered under the stage, having gone down there fearlessly to see what had caused the trouble, and to find out whether anyone had been hurt!

CHAPTER XII

The Future of Police Work—Modern criminals and their punishments—Are the gunmen coming here?—Should policemen be armed?—Bad times ahead if too much leniency is exercised in laws and sentences.

ANY book on police work resolves itself in the end to the question of whether crime is decreasing, whether criminals are sanely treated, whether the law is equal and just, and what outlook the future holds for us in the way of reduction of crime and increased civil safety. Making Heaven on earth is naturally a big job, and depends on a good many other factors besides the man in blue; but I think that the trend of criminal affairs during the last thirty years, on which period I can speak from personal experience, is very satisfactory indeed. Brutal crimes are notably less; the pest of drugs is being dealt with; education and social work are clearing up many of the slum plague-spots which, in 1900, bred hundreds of fore-ordained criminals who had looked on the policeman as their natural enemy from childhood up.

The nature of crime has largely changed; the bludgeon has been exchanged for the automatic—the methods of Sykes for the light-fingered artistry of Raffles. Raffles is no more romantic than Sykes; he is more detestable because, with his education and abilities, he should be able to find better employment than living parasitically on the more honest part of the community. He is a scoundrel who gives the police infinitely more trouble than did the rough old lag who preceded him as a type; he works with nitro-

glycerine, chilled steel drills and modern vegetable poisons, instead of carrying an old sack for the swag and a sheath-knife for the owner. He opposes the finger-print department by wearing rubber gloves; his accent is faultless and his clothes Savile Row; in at least five cases out of ten he takes to crime more for the thrill than because of necessity or hunger.

Education, as it continues to spread, will gradually eliminate from the Rogue's Calendar all except the mental pervert who murders for thrill or to rid himself of a rival whose existence starves his lust; the mental weakling who steals or otherwise misbehaves because he is a little insane; and the shifty business man whose crimes come into the category of "pushing" worthless shares, attempting confidence tricks and robbing old women by promising them marriage. When that time comes—and it should not be many years, now—the current annual number of police convictions should be cut down to about one-half of their present total.

There is a powerful movement on foot in the country to treat the criminal as a man or woman mentally diseased; to make prisons into convalescent homes, to release thieves and forgers on parole, to reason with the men who assault children and to give murderers a pleasant holiday in hospital, feeding them carefully on potted chicken essence and religious tracts which have all water in them and nothing else at all. I can repeat what I have said elsewhere in this book—that such a course is even more dangerous folly than it sounds! For every murderer to-day we would then have twenty; for every thief, forty; for every minor crime, a hundred. Men may be only a little lower than the angels, taking them all round, but I have come into contact with a very great many criminals who are very little higher than the devils, whose word is not worth the breath wasted upon

it, who would administer slow poison to their dearest friend in order to pick his pockets after and who would throttle the benefactor who pleads for them with less compunction than most men would drown a new-born kitten.

It is a striking and significant fact from official police records that the "cat"—a form of punishment which is more bewailed by humanitarians than any other—has never had to be administered to one man for two separate crimes. Horrible! Wicked! exclaims the humanitarian. Presumably he means that it would be better to let men convicted of the most utter and brutal violence (for only then is the "cat" awarded) repeat their offence again and again, so that our towns might be filled with lurking bullies and our country lanes made unfit for any decent woman to walk in them alone?

There are other and even more sinister dangers of too great leniency towards criminals. The lawless state of America to-day has been caused because repressive methods have not been harsh enough. That is what it amounts to; the roots of the business go down to such details as criminals being able to buy easy liberation with money or threats, to police who are bribed into shutting the official eye and political jobsters who are hand in glove with the unruly elements. But the effect is the same—harmful units of the public being allowed to commit crimes without paying the penalty.

If it were not for our policemen and our judges, we would have gangsters in London to-morrow. Or am I perhaps behind the times; are they there already? The number of cases of murder by shooting that have been recorded in the last twelve months in the British Isles far exceeds that of the previous year and is more than double the record of any year up to 1925. The murder of P.C. Gutteridge is not the only recent example of cold-blooded

killing by lawless rogues. Already there is an outcry in certain quarters, and a demand that policemen should be armed with revolvers, as they are in practically every other European country, and as they are in the United States.

To that suggestion every experienced detective officer offers strong opposition. Once that sort of thing is begun it cannot be stopped. Give the policeman an automatic and, almost in self defence, burglars and other law-breakers will carry them too. Then it is merely a matter of whose nerves give way first, and the result would be a pool of blood. Machine-guns would obviously follow, as they have in America—not the bulky machine-gun of war pictures but the weapon more properly called a machine-rifle, which can be carried and used by one man. The result of arming the police would be something not so far short of a minor civil war. As a result of the reprisals of criminals, every householder who valued his safety would also be forced to carry a gun. Chaos and wholesale murder would ensue.

It is at present argued that the police baton is a step in this direction. People who argue thus are absolutely ignorant of the regulations which control the use of the baton. A policeman may not draw his "stick" except to repel an assault with weapons upon his person or upon his prisoner, save, of course, at the command of a responsible senior officer in the case of a baton charge. Even then, he is strictly enjoined to use it only on the arms and legs of his opponents; not upon their heads or in any way likely to cause vital injury. It happens time and again that a policeman is set upon, mobbed and seriously hurt, and he makes no effort whatever to draw the weapon with which he is provided, preferring to face the blows of the crowd rather than the wrath of his superiors. The very greatest forbearance is shown throughout the Force in this matter, as any unbiased critic must admit. Besides, if burglars arm

themselves with sticks in reply, no great harm will be done.

Another recent outcry has been directed against modern prisons. Honest and well-intentioned people have said that the system of placing a criminal among his fellows in dishonour takes from him all chance of improving his nature and changing himself into a good citizen. It is, in fact, the Christian doctrine of forgiving up to seventy times seven extended to meet the case of the money-changers of the Temple. The obvious cure for the kindly folk who create all these humane outcries is to put them among prisoners, and let them see for themselves what nasty people criminals really are—except on visiting day! The pleas for gentleness, the desire to set the robber and the murderer free again with a warning—they are about equivalent to arranging for the release of all those nice lions and tigers from the Zoo, and letting them wander among our children at their play.

It is absurd to suggest that criminals are a class of humanity different from and inferior to the rest of us; in fact we all have criminal instincts in us somewhere. But it is perfectly correct to conclude that those who break the laws created for the good of the majority should be dealt with in such a way that, for their own sakes as well as those of the rest of the world, they will not repeat their offence. These people understand one impulse only—that of fear. They know nothing of love and kindness as a deterrent to crime, except in a very few cases; they will snivel and whine in the hope of personal gain, but unless you offer them some inducement they will do nothing but snarl.

Places of confinement must be arranged for such people. The taxpayer must pay for their food and lodging in such places, but there is no reason why the inmates should laze

their time away listening to moral lectures there. They should work like the better men who pay for their confinement. In nearly all our prisons, some form of work is done; prison doctors see that the work is not too hard for the individual cases, and make whatever allowances seem reasonable in exceptional circumstances. Prisoners of unusual religions are allowed every reasonable facility for following their beliefs; those who need special diet are given it; the discipline is stern but just and humane. Food given to the prisoners is tested by officials, and improved as frequently as may be. But in nearly all our prisons, the fare is better than that which you would see on many an honest East End table.

In the occasional prison outbreaks which periodically take place, the facts of the case are enquired into with rigour and impartiality. Causes for complaint are removed, but mutineers are punished. Generous allowance is made for good behaviour while serving a sentence; all sorts of restrictions are removed and all sorts of compensations given if a prisoner shows markedly good behaviour. If a man really does his best to make things easy for the authorities, they repay him by giving him a position of trust in which he is very little more of a prisoner than are the warders themselves.

On the whole, I do not think that there is very much wrong with any part of our present legal, judicial or police systems. So long as the sound common-sense of the country can quell the rabid outcries of the ignorant minority who call for more restrictions on the policeman and less retribution for the criminal, England will remain the safest and happiest country in the whole world in which to live. But once let things slacken, and we shall attain the present browbeaten and disorganized condition of modern America, and that state of things can more easily be made than

righted. In England, we don't want our babies kidnapped, our women threatened and our men murdered on their way to the office or by being shot in their beds. Nor is there any need for such horrors to occur here, so long as the public will continue to give a full measure of trust and responsibility to the Force in which I, for one, am very proud to have served.

INDEX

A

Alexandra, Queen, 263
Arcos Raid, 90, 93

B

Bacon, George Vaux, 179
Balabaroff, Angelica, 84
Balfour, Mr., 18
Beatrice, Princess, 263
Blackmail, 208
Blom, 172
Borch, Count de, 184
British Consulate murder, 69
Bronstein, Leiba. *See* Trotsky
Buckingham Palace incident, 50
Buschmann, 143

C

Camorra Society, 204
Casement, Sir R., 62, 162
Censoring Department, 127
Cream, Neil, 238
Crombie, Captain, D.S.O., 69
Curzon, Lord, 262
Curzon-Wyllie, Colonel (murder),
 38

D

Derval, Marie, 30
Dhingra, Madan Lal, 39

Dierks and Co., 101, 125, 133, 155
Drug menace, 221
Duquesne, Fritz, 188

E

Edward VII, H.M. King, 260, 263

F

Flores spy school, 123
Foreign criminals in England, 195
French, Lord, 16

G

Gardstein, 43
General Strike, 1926, 91
George V, H.M. King, 52, 54
George, Lloyd, 18
Gorki, Maxim, 28
Grant, Captain, 112
Greite, F. L., 166
Greuning, Baron von, 126
Grosse, Herr, 115

H

Hahn, Carl, 186
Hahn (spy), 146
Hampshire, sinking of, 165

INDEX

- Hefeld, 35
 Hickmann, Heinz, 165
 Homke, Otto, 176
 Horwood, Sir William, 17
 Hyman, Myer, 77

J

- Jackson, Mrs., 113
 Janssen, H. M. P., 136
 Jonas, Sir Joseph, 186
 Joscelyne (murder), 37

K

- Karpovitch, 33
 Kitchener, Lord, 165
 Krebel, Helene de. *See* Derval
 Ku Klux Klan, 202

L

- Lalcaca, Dr. Cawas, 38
 Lapidus, Jacob, 35, 38
 Lapidus, Peter, 35
 Lenin, 21, 23, 58, 71
 Lincoln, Trebitsch, 79
 Litvinoff, 69
 Lupton, Arnold, M.P., 65

M

- MacDonald, Ramsay, 66
 Mafia Society, 203
 Malatesta, Enrico, 45
 Malone, Colonel, M.P., 87
 Marks, Joseph, 141
 Midget spies, 171
 Molly Maguire Society, 205
 Morel, E. D., 62

- Morley, Viscount, 38
 Muller, Max (anarchist), 22, 24
 Muller (spy), 148

N

- Night Clubs, 219

O

- Olaf, Prince of Norway, 262

P

- Perceval, Spencer, 19
 Peterssen, 112
 Peter the Painter, 45
 Pickard, Leo, 171
 Police Strike, 1918, 72
 Popovitch, Mme, 156
 Povinelli, Leone, 32
 Prostitution, 227

R

- Roggen, 149
 Roos, Willem, 132
 Rowland, R., 153, 158

S

- Scarborough bombardment, 130
 Schultz, Dr., 108
 Scotland Yard Special Department,
 18
 Seamen's Union, 60
 Secret societies, 202
 Segal, Max, 78
 Seidler, Martinns, 103

INDEX

275

Serajevo incident, 19, 48
Shop Stewards' Committee, 59
Silk Letters Plot, 168
Smith, Mrs., 155
Soermus, J. E., 78
Spain, Queen of, 263
Steinhauer, 119

T

Tobler, Max, 108
Trotsky, 25, 30, 58
Tyler, Police-Constable (murder of),
 36

U

Uljanoff, Vladimir. *See* Lenin

V

Victoria, H.M. Queen, 19
Ville, Morel de. *See* Morel
Vingquist, 182

W

Wensley, Superintendent, 43
Wertheim, Lizzie, 153, 155
Westhaus. *See* Steinhauer.
White Slave Traffic, 230
Wilhelm, Kaiser, 105
Wilson, Sir Henry, 16

Z

Zachiarassen, Axel, 83
Zinovieff Letter, 90



